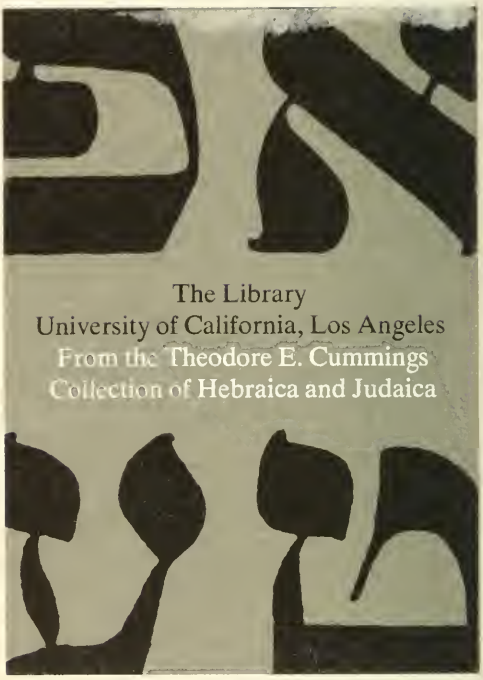
MAX LILIENTHAL

American Rabbi

Philipson.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DR. MAX LILIENTHAL
(Aet. 60)

MAX LILIENTHAL

AMERICAN RABBI

LIFE AND WRITINGS

BY

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AUTHOR OF THE REFORM MOVEMENT IN JUDAISM, ETC., ETC.

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PREFACE

Seventy years ago the famous Jewish leader whose life is presented in these pages stepped foot upon the shore of the United States after an adventurous career in the domain of the Czar. During the thirty-seven years that he lived in this country he became so indoctrinated with the American principle that, though he was of German birth, the proper designation to apply to him is that used on the title page of this volume, "American Rabbi."

I desire to express my thanks to the surviving children of Dr. Lilienthal for placing at my disposal the letters written by him from Russia to members of his family, as well as for many other courtesies. These letters, now published for the first time, constitute a real contribution to Jewish epistolary literature.

My thanks are also due Mr. A. S. Oko, the librarian of the Hebrew Union College, for his constant readiness to make accessible to me books and periodicals in the library bearing on the subject in hand.

I have long felt that Dr. Lilienthal's valuable sketches entitled "My Travels in Russia" should be preserved in some permanent form. I have therefore included them in this volume. The sketches have been edited here and there and supplied with footnotes, which are for the most part explanations of Hebrew words and expressions.

The addresses and letters which form the closing

section of the book have been selected with a view of illustrating phases of Dr. Lilienthal's American career.

This volume has been prepared as a tribute of affection and admiration to the memory of my never-to-be-forgotten teacher and predecessor in office. Jew in religion, American in nationality, Max Lilienthal championed throughout his life the causes of Jewish idealism and American liberty. Therefore do we recall with reverent gratitude the fine service of this great American rabbi on the occasion of the centenary of his birth.

DAVID PHILIPSON.

MAX LILIENTHAL

LIFE AND WRITINGS

LIFE

CHAPTER I.

BAVARIAN BIRTHPLACE—CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

The opening years of the nineteenth century brought little relief from medieval conditions to the Jews of Bavaria. As in other parts of Germany, and in truth, throughout Europe, the Jews in the Bavarian kingdom had, during the centuries that they had lived in the country, been subjected to indignities and disabilities of all kinds. Thus, an edict published in 1553 classed the Jews among "dangerous and suspicious persons" who must be prevented from dwelling in the country or carrying on any trade or engaging in any industry. Jews of other lands who were obliged to pass through Bavaria were compelled to secure a passport, for which they had to pay toll and convoy fees. In 1715 the Elector Max Emanuel ordered the deportation of the few Jews who still remained in the country. In 1733 all current passports were canceled; a new poll tax was levied as well as a new convoy tax. Jews were excluded from all trades, from military service, and from the merchant guilds; they were denied entrance to the public baths and were forbidden to settle in the country.[1]

The new spirit which arose in Europe towards the close of the eighteenth century exerted some influence in favor of the Jews even in so reactionary a country

[1] S. Taussig, *Geschichte der Juden in Bayern,* 61 ff. (München, 1894).

as Bavaria. Further, the financial conditions were so unfavorable at this time that this caused a change in the attitude of the authorities towards the Jews. Bills were drafted by the provisional government between 1785-91 which were more lenient than the drastic legislation in force hitherto. For example, such Jews as could furnish indubitable evidence that they possessed sufficient means to engage in industry were permitted to settle in the country. The degrading poll tax was repealed and only a tax on patents of commerce was imposed. A few Jews were ennobled and several received official recognition from the state.

Owing to these more favorable conditions the Jewish community of Munich, the capital city of the country, increased in numbers. Still there were only thirty-one families in the city in 1800. The community had neither a synagog nor a cemetery, neither being permitted them. They buried their dead in the cemetery at Kriegshaber, near Augsburg. However, a *chebra kadischa,* or association for carrying out the ritual commands in case of death, was organized in Munich in 1806. The one-hundredth anniversary of this oldest Jewish organization in the Bavarian capital was celebrated appropriately nine years ago.

In 1813 an edict was promulgated regulating the affairs of the Jews. This edict pronounced them citizens of Bavaria as far as their duties were concerned, but as to rights, they were only partial citizens. The edict contained some enactments in accord with the new spirit of emancipation which had spread abroad, notably as a result of the influence of the French, but it retained also survivals of the past ages of restriction and oppression. Most humiliating among these was the so-called *Matrikelgesetz.* According to this in-

human enactment, the number of Jews who could found a family was limited to such as possessed this right. Accordingly, only a restricted number of Jewish families was permitted in the community. No young man could marry legally who had not the *Matrikel.* This usually descended from father to oldest son. Younger sons were thus debarred from marrying legally. However, it happened frequently in Bavarian and Bohemian communities, where the same Pharaonic law was in force, that couples who had not this right were married according to the rites of the synagog. In the eyes of the state, such marriages were illegal and the children illegitimate. The edict of 1813 also restricted freedom of residence and allowed no increase of Jewish families anywhere. In fact, in places where this number appeared too large, it could be diminished. There were quite a number of towns in Bavaria in which there were no Jews, they having been expelled at one time or other, and never permitted to return. Again, there were a few places which had come to be known as "cities of refuge;" these, like Fürth and Ichenhausen, had large Jewish congregations. According to the edict of 1813, permission to settle in towns where there were no Jews was to be granted only upon the most rigorous conditions and by the highest authority. The edict then was far different from the emancipation edict promulgated in another German kingdom the year previously—the famous Prussian emancipation edict of 1812. It was much more medieval in spirit, and the Jews were continued to be hedged round with a fence of exclusion.

Among the few who possessed the right of residence in Munich at this time was Seligman Löb

Lilienthal, a wholesale merchant in affluent circumstances. To him and his wife, Dina, who was the daughter of another Munich family, the Lichtensteins, there was born on October 16, 1815,[2] a son who was destined to have a brilliant career. The boy was named Menachem, or in the Germanized form of the name, Max. He lost his mother when he was but nine years of age. There is a tradition in the family that he promised his mother on her deathbed that he would study to become a rabbi.

In the home wherein he grew up there were four other children, the brothers Samuel and Silas, and the sisters Sophie (who married Dr. John Lehmeier) and Henrietta (who married Dr. Philip Nettre, the brother of Pepi, who became the wife of Max Lilienthal). Sophie took the mother's place as far as this was possible in the household.

During the early years of the life of these children

[2] The date usually given in published biographies of Lilienthal as the day of his birth is November 6, 1815. This is incorrect. A letter to his fiancee, Miss Pepi Nettre, in Munich, dated St. Petersburg, October 16, 1841, opens with the words, "I wonder what you are doing on this, my birthday!" Further, the year 1815, usually accepted as the year of his birth, may be open to question, owing to the fact that the inscription on his tombstone in the United Jewish Cemetery at Cincinnati gives 1814 as the year of birth. However, despite this evidence which would usually be considered incontestable, we have a statement by Dr. Lilienthal himself which indicates beyond doubt that he was born in 1815. The opening sentence of his itinerary, "My Travels in Russia" reads, "I was but twenty-three years of age when I left for Russia." This was in the beginning of October, 1839, shortly before his twenty-fourth birthday. Had he been born in the fall of 1814 as the tombstone inscription has it he would have been twenty-four years old at this time and on the verge of his twenty-fifth birthday.

in the Lilienthal home, important events were taking place affecting the status and welfare of the Jews in Bavaria. The first Bavarian Diet assembled in 1819. The larger Jewish congregations of the country sent delegates to Munich to work for the enfranchisement of the Jews. The leader of these delegates was Samson Wolf Rosenfeld, rabbi in Uehlfeld and Bamberg, and author of a number of pamphlets on emancipation. The efforts of Rosenfeld and his colleagues towards inducing the members of the Diet to take favorable action on the question of Jewish enfranchisement might have proved successful, since the Diet promised to comply with the request, had it not been for the wave of anti-Jewish agitation which convulsed the country while the Diet was in session. This was the famous, or rather infamous, Hep! hep![3] agitation which, beginning in Würzburg with attacks on the Jews, spread through Franconia and passed into Bavaria and other parts of Germany. The Hep! hep! cry resounded throughout the country and, influenced by the state of the popular mind, the Diet declared on May 13, 1822, that the time for the emancipation of the Jews had not yet arrived.

However, in 1818, some time before this brutal anti-Jewish crusade, the government had permitted the small Jewish community of Munich to acquire a cemetery, and in 1824 granted them the permission to build a synagog; this first synagog of Munich

[3] It is frequently asserted that this cry Hep! hep! (the three initial letters of *Hierosolyma est perdita*) was a medieval anti-Jewish slogan. Of this there is no proof. As far as can be learned, it was used for the first time at this period and was the invention of the students at Würzburg. See Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, XI, 357.

Jewry was dedicated on April 11, 1827. The high standing of the Lilienthal family in the community is attested by the fact that the father was a member of the board of administration at the time of the dedication. The other members of this board were Israel Hirsch Pappenheimer, Jacob von Hirsch (the grandfather of the famous philanthropist, Maurice de Hirsch), Raphael Kaula (in the famous collection of beautiful Bavarian women in one of the Munich palaces there is a picture of a Fräulein von Kaula, who was doubtless a member of this family), Anselm Marx and M. H. Seligstein. Lilienthal was also a member of the governing board of the *chebra Kadischa* mentioned above.

A far-reaching action in its influence on the life and development of the Bavarian Jews was the passing, in 1828, of the edict for the organization of Jewish schools on modern lines. The Jewish communities were greatly agitated. Great difficulties were encountered in carrying out the decree in a number of communities, the members of which clung to the old *cheder* method. The new was reprehensible merely because it was new; the old was good merely because it was old. According to this edict, only a teacher who passed successfully examinations required by the government could be appointed by the congregations to instruct in the schools; such appointees, if ratified by the government, could not be dismissed without the consent of the government. In a manner the Jewish schools thus became governmental schools. Before this time the *cheder,* or Jewish school, was a private institution. The children were taught only Hebrew branches by a teacher known as the *melammed,* who was usually without pedagog-

ical training. All this was to be changed. The edict also provided that after the year 1833 the teachers had to be graduates of seminaries.

It was at this period that young Max Lilienthal began attending the University of Munich with the idea of securing the education which would equip him to occupy the rabbinical office under the changed conditions in Jewish life. A number of communities in Germany were looking for rabbis who combined the secular learning acquired at the university with the erudition secured from the study of the ancient Hebrew lore. These were the years of storm and conflict. Rabbis of the old school condemned the newer learning as detrimental to the religion. Traditionalism and modernism were locking horns; the former made a hard, but vain fight; it could not stem the current of progress and reform. The young men educated in the universities had an altogether different outlook upon life than had the rabbis whose learning was confined to the intricacies of the Talmud and the codes. Max Lilienthal grew to manhood in those seething years when the Jewish communities of Germany, notably in the larger cities, were greatly agitated by the new hopes. He and his brother Samuel,[4] to whom he remained greatly attached throughout his life, both received their education at the university of their native city.[5] Max graduated

[4] Samuel graduated from the university as doctor of medicine, and emigrated to the United States, where he practiced successfully for many years.

[5] Many years later Max Lilienthal referred to his life at the university in these words: "I still remember today my Christian fellow students at the University of Munich; they deplored the state of my soul, they said, because of my religious profession. Several of them, young men to whom

in 1837, receiving the degree of doctor of philosophy, the subject of his thesis being "Ueber den Ursprung der jüdisch-alexandrischen Religionsphilosophie".[6]

He received his Hebrew education from Rabbi Moses Wittelsbacher and attended also the famous *yeshibah* of Wolf Hamburger in Fürth, the academy for higher Jewish learning, among whose pupils were other young men who also became famous reform rabbis, such as David Einhorn, Isaac Loewi, of Fürth, Leopold Stein, of Frankfort, Joseph Aub, of Berlin, as well as that pillar of orthodoxy, Seligman Baer Bamberger. He received the rabbinical degree from Hirsch Aub, rabbi of Munich.

Lilienthal passed so brilliant an examination in taking his degree at the university that he was offered a position in the diplomatic service. Although it had been his fixed purpose to follow the rabbinical career, still this offer was so tempting that he felt impelled to accept it, notably since, owing to the loss of the family possessions through a disastrous fire, he, as the eldest of the children, felt it incumbent upon himself to assist in the rearing of his brothers and sisters. However, upon being informed that if he accepted this post, he must become converted to Catholicism, he rejected the offer indignantly. This closed the incident, the minister of foreign affairs assuring him that such being his attitude, he could not possibly pursue a diplomatic career in Bavaria.

I was attached by the bonds of the most sincere friendship, believed me irretrievably lost! How ridiculous, how blasphemous this doctrine sounds!" *Israelite,* III, 44.

[6] Published in Munich, 1839, J. A. Giesser. The dissertation was dedicated to Hirsch Aub, the rabbi of the Munich congregation.

He turned definitely now to what had been his heart's desire from the first, the rabbinical office. But a change had come upon the government's legislation in the matter of filling these offices. The movement for religious reform was alarming the adherents of traditional Judaism. They succeeded in impressing the government with the dangerous tendencies of the "innovators", as the reformers were called. But in this bitter opposition to all religious reform they were playing with fire, for the government was not satisfied with legislating against this alone, but in 1838 an edict was issued which reenacted all the harshest restrictive measures against the Jews; among others were the following: the *Matrikel* was enforced rigidly; Jews were excluded from the bench, the bar and the army; it was forbidden to record a house in the name of a Jew in a place where he did not live; no Jew was permitted to remain longer than three days in the fortress of Ingolstadt. And in that same year the order was issued forbidding congregations from selecting as their rabbis, such candidates as held liberal views, or, as the exact words of the decree put it, "candidates favoring destructive neology". Whether or no this was the reason why Lilienthal did not succeed in securing a position, there is no means of knowing, but the fact remains that he never officiated as rabbi for a Bavarian congregation. His work was to lie in other lands.

However, he was not idle during this time. The fine collection of Hebrew manuscripts in the royal library of Munich attracted his attention. He wrote an account of the collection under the title, "Bibliographical Notices on the Hebrew Manuscripts in the

Royal Library at Munich".[7] These notices were published during the course of over a year running from May 19, 1838, to November 16, 1839, in the literary supplement of the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums*. It was also noted in the columns of this journal that he was at work on a history of the Jews in Bavaria[8] although this was never published. Through this literary work the young scholar was brought into intimate communication with Dr. Ludwig Philippson, the editor of the journal in question, the only Jewish newspaper in Germany at the time. It was through this connection that the opening years of Lilienthal's active career were passed, not as rabbi in a small Bavarian Jewish congregation, but as the companion of statesmen and diplomats in the great Russian empire. For it was Ludwig Philippson, the best-known German Jew, to whom Uwaroff, the Russian Minister of Education, turned for advice as to who should be entrusted with the superintendency of the new school to be established in Riga, the beginning of the great task of modernizing the Jewish schools in Russia. And Ludwig Philippson recommended Max Lilienthal as the young man who, in his opinion, was best equipped for this pioneer work. He was recommended to Uwaroff also by the Russian ambassador to Munich. It was through Ludwig Philippson's recommendations, too, that the positions of preacher of the Leipzig temple and of the congregation at Szegedin, in Hungary, had been offered to him before this. While these negotiations were pending the op-

[7] *Bibliographische Notizen über die hebräischen Manuskripte der Königlichen Bibliothek zu München.*

[8] *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums. Homiletisches und Literarisches Beiblatt,* 1838, 80.

portunity of going to Russia as teacher and preacher at Riga presented itself. This call was accepted for the reason as stated by himself that "the sphere of activity in such a vast empire flattered my youthful vanity, and hoping for the best results of my sincere endeavors to raise the million of Jews to a higher standard, I asked the Russian ambassador at Munich for my passport".[9]

[9] Lilienthal, *My Travels in Russia,* Infra, p. 159.

CHAPTER II.

THE RUSSIAN CAREER.

The unrest in German Jewry in the early decades of the nineteenth century was reflected in a slighter measure in the great empire of the czar, where dwelt the large majority of the Jews of Europe. The great mass of these Jews had, it is true, been touched in no way by the modern spirit; among them the rabbinical interpretation of the law held full sway. In the eighteenth century there had arisen in Russia the movement known as *Chassidism,* a protest against the rigorous legalism of rabbinical tradition. The sect of the *Chassidim,* noble and pure as were the motives of the founder, Israel Baal Shem,[1] had degenerated into superstitious obscurantists, whom the wonder-working rabbis held in thrall. Still the effect of the newer efforts for secular education, so marked among German Jews since the days of Moses Mendelssohn, found an echo in some Jewish quarters in Russia. The men who headed these attempts to bring their coreligionists into accord with the modern spirit are known as *Maskilim,* and the movement which they sponsored as the Haskala movement.[2] This movement was concerned largely with the effort to found schools in which the children and the youth should receive instruction in what we now call secular branches, as

[1] Schechter *Studies in Judaism,* I, 16 ff. (Philadelphia, 1896).

[2] Raisin, *The Haskala Movement* (Philadelphia, 1913).

well as in the traditional Hebrew disciplines, which had formed the entire content of education hitherto. This Haskala movement in Russia was the reflex of the Mendelssohnian movement in Germany, but the obstacles in Russia, both within from the Jewish communities, and without from the government were much greater and progress was therefore much more retarded.

As early as the year 1800, a physician, Dr. Frank, who had studied in Berlin and settled in western Russia, published a severe arraignment of the educational methods then in vogue among Russian Jews; he advocated the establishment of schools in which instruction should be imparted in Russian, German and Hebrew along modern lines.[3] This publication attracted the notice of the government and attention began to be paid to the subject of the education of the Jewish youth. A decree issued in 1804 granted Jews admission to the educational institutions of the government. In this decree the warning was given that if the permission here given was not taken advantage of, special Jewish schools, the expense of which would have to be borne by the Jews, would be instituted by the government. When the government took steps to found such schools, owing to the fact that very few of the Jewish young visited the government schools, the native Jews put forth all efforts to prevent this. A few schools for general culture were founded in course of time with the help of foreign Jews, the first being that at Uman, established in 1820

[3] Julius Hessen, *Die russische Regierung und die westeuropäischen Juden—Zur Schulreform in Russland,* 1840-44, 5 (St. Petersburg, 1913).

under the superintendency of a Galician Jew, Meier Horn.[4]

In 1823, Isaac Beer Levinsohn, possibly the most famous of the leaders in the Haskalah movement, directed a petition in German to the Grand Duke Constantine to found schools for Jewish children and academies for Jewish teachers.[5] He also issued a publication in Hebrew[6] in which he urged his views upon his coreligionists to the effect that besides a knowledge of the books of the Bible and their meaning, of the Mishnah and the Talmud, and of the Hebrew language, it was necessary that the Jew know also other languages and especially the language of his country; also that he should learn a trade and notably agriculture. He followed this up with a petition to the czar, Nicholas I, in 1836 that schools be established for Jewish children, through the instruction they received in which they might become useful citizens to the country; if Jewish children had proper teachers they would realize the fondest expectations.[7] Although the emperor received the petition graciously, nothing was done towards realizing the proposal at this time.

However, the ideas here suggested by Levinsohn

[4] Seven years previously, in 1813, Joseph Perl had opened a school in Tarnopol, Galicia. Technically this was the first such school in Russia as Tarnopol happened to belong to Russia at that time, it having been ceded to that country by Austria in 1810; however, it was recovered by Austria by the treaty of Paris in 1814, and has remained part of that empire since. Hence the school at Tarnopol can scarcely be considered a Russian but rather an Austrian Jewish school.

[5] David Kahana *Lilienthal we haskalat hayehudim berussiyah* in *Haschiloach,* XXVII, 320.

[6] *Teudah Beyisrael* (Vilna, 1836). Kahana. Ibid.

[7] Kahana. Ibid, 321.

were carried out in two places: in Odessa where such a school was founded by Basilius (Bezalel) Stern, a native of Tarnopol, Galicia, and in Riga in Livonia, to the superintendency of which Max Lilienthal was called from Munich in Germany.

In the year 1837, a letter appeared in the columns of the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums,*[8] dated Riga, November 13, 1837, and signed by the officers of the congregation, H. W. Hamburger, N. A. Scheinesson, Benj. Nachman and N. Berkowitz. This letter sets forth the desire of the congregation for a German teacher and preacher, since German was the mother tongue of the Jews of Riga; such a man was not to be found in Russia where there was no modern education and no modern enlightenment among the Jews. The leader they desired must be a man of modern culture, but of conservative religious tendencies.

The following year Count Uwaroff, the Minister of Education, came to Riga, and the representatives of the Jewish congregation presented to him a petition requesting governmental permission to open a school in two sections, the one for boys and the other for girls, wherein the Jewish religion was to be taught systematically and instruction in the Bible was to be given after the German translation of Mendelssohn; the superintendent was to be a foreigner of the Jewish faith who had been trained in the spirit of pure enlightenment; the assistant was to be a Christian. This petition found favor in the eyes of Uwaroff and he considered it of such interest and importance that he laid it before the czar. Being favored by the emperor,

[8] Vol. I, 410-12.

the request to found the school was ratified. Steps were taken at once to put the plan into operation. As the school was by the action of the emperor under governmental protection, Uwaroff undertook to secure a capable superintendent; as already stated, through the recommendation of Ludwig Philippson, the choice fell upon Max Lilienthal.

The young man, only twenty-three years of age, left his father's house on the eighth day of October, 1839. In a letter written to his brother eighteen months later in which he gives a detailed account of the journey from his home to St. Petersburg, he says in speaking of this departure: "You know the pain of farewell; wherefore then should I picture it, wherefore reopen the wound that has begun to close?" He arranged his itinerary in such a manner as to stop at a number of cities where he might meet well-known Jewish leaders; at Madgeburg he consulted with Philippson, at Hamburg with Salomon and Kley, the preachers of the famous reform congregations, and at Altona with Steinheim, the philosophical writer whom he terms "the Maimonides of our day". He arrived at St. Petersburg on the twenty-fourth of October, where he had some audiences with Uwaroff and with the Minister of the Interior, Count Stroganoff. In this same letter he tells why he had gone to St. Petersburg first instead of proceeding directly to Riga: "I had journeyed hither at the wish of the congregation to intercede here in their interest, for they are engaged at present in the struggle to secure the rights of citizenship. In carrying out this commission I won the friendship of many prominent men who were most helpful to me. Having convinced myself that the congregation would experience great

difficulty in achieving its purpose and that for this reason the position of the school is very precarious, which anyone who is at all familiar with the conditions in this country readily perceives, I sought to pave the way for a future rich in possibilities by submitting to the said ministers a plan for the establishment of consistories, which was received with much favor".

The Jews of Riga had been engaged for some years in the struggle to establish their right of citizenship. They had been living in Riga a long time and had been left unmolested. In 1797 the Jews had secured from Emperor Paul the right to have their names entered among the inhabitants of the city; the Christians attempted to have this permission nullified by all manner of devices; the struggle continued for forty years until finally in 1835 a ukase was issued which contained the provision that Riga was among the localities in which Jews were permitted to live. The claim of the Jews that this permission carried with it the right to form a congregation being contested by Christians, the matter, after a struggle of six years, was finally settled by an imperial decree of December 17, 1841, which declared: first, that Jews who had actually had their residence in Riga up to that time should be enrolled as inhabitants of the city and be permitted to continue their residence there, without, however, enjoying the right of citizenship or the right to possess real estate; secondly, Jews of other places were from now on forbidden to remove to Riga; thirdly, the Jews who by this decree were permitted to enrol themselves as inhabitants of Riga must wear German dress; fourthly, the fixing of the rights whereby Jews could pursue business in Riga would be included in the general decree concerning com-

merce in Riga. In 1842, 517 Jews were enrolled as inhabitants of Riga under the style and title: "The Jewish community of Riga".[9]

After a sojourn of ten weeks in St. Petersburg, Lilienthal arrived at Riga on January 12, 1840. He was greeted with enthusiasm. He himself entered upon his new task with the highest hopes. He was to blaze a new path. It was a mission which might well exalt any man. He was to proclaim to his people the message of the new era, to bring light where there was darkness. Could he have looked into the future, he might well have been discouraged, but he saw only the great possibilities of the opportunity that had come to him. Even fourteen months after he arrived in Russia and seven months after he had begun his larger work, in spite of the obstacles that he had already encountered, he still felt that his mission was divinely ordained, for in the letter referred to above he wrote to his father: "Am I to believe that God has cast me into Russia merely to humor a whim and that He will thrust me forth again to satisfy His pleasure? I think otherwise when I consider what I have accomplished in seven months".

His work in Russia began with the establishment of the school at Riga. The school was opened on January 16, 1840. Lilienthal delivered the inaugural address in German. The young director devoted himself to his task with the greatest enthusiasm. Secular as well as sacred branches were taught. The entire day was consumed in the prosecution of the work of the school. The efforts of Lilienthal called forth a remarkable encomium from Professor Risberg, of the

[9] Wunderbar, *Geschichte der Juden in Liv- und Kurland,* 12-13 (Mitau, 1853).

University of Dorpat, who reported to Count Uwaroff as follows: "The Jewish school in Riga, which was founded recently under the guidance of the genial, experienced and thorough scholar, Doctor Lilienthal, has attained already a flourishing development. I report with pleasure the astonishing results in geography, history and arithmetic, German grammar and the Russian language. The present attainment of this new seat of enlightenment surpasses all the most eager expectations and assures for it a joyous, brilliant future".[10]

Uwaroff quoted these words in a statement to the czar concerning Lilienthal's work in Riga. In recognition of this work and the spirit evinced in Lilienthal's inaugural address at the opening of the school, the czar presented him with a diamond ring.

The congregation also elected Lilienthal preacher. His sermons delivered in the German language[11] attracted large congregations of both Jews and Christians. The Jews recognized in a short time his earnestness and conscientiousness and the suspicions that they may have entertained soon disappeared. The rabbi of the community, a Talmudist of the old school, gave him a hearty welcome. Neither interfered with the sphere of the other. Lilienthal's fame spread beyond the confines of Riga. The *Maskilim* hailed him as a new and great leader. He entered into correspondence with a number of them, notably the

[10] Quoted in Scheinhaus, *Ein Deutscher Pionier (Dr. Lilienthal's Kulturversuch in Russland); Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums,* Vol. LXXV (1911), 405.

[11] These sermons were published in a volume entitled *Predigten in der Synagoge zu Riga* (Riga, 1841). The volume was dedicated to Uwaroff.

famous M. A. Günzberg[12] and Nissin Rosenthal, the most prominent of the *Maskilim* of Vilna.

His great success in Riga made him a marked man.[13] He was eulogized by the advocates of the newer education among the Russian Jews and denounced as a "Berliner" or "Datschel" and an innovator by the *Chassidim* and the followers of the old order. Uwaroff, too, kept in constant touch with his work. After he had been active in Riga a year, Lilienthal was called to St. Petersburg by the minister to inaugurate the larger task of founding schools in all the Russian Jewish communities like unto that which he had manned so successfully in Riga.

Preliminary steps toward this end had already been taken. In 1839 the Czar Nicholas evinced the first spark of kindly feeling towards his Jewish subjects when he said of them, "They are my children and my servants altogether". He issued a ukase calling for assemblies in six cities in the provinces where the Jews dwelt in greatest numbers for the discussion of such themes as the position and the work of the rabbis, the education of the children and how to make good and useful citizens of the Jews. At the same time a council of ministers, with Uwaroff at their head, was held in St. Petersburg to deliberate on the same subjects. They decided to open schools for Jewish children. As a result of this conference Uwaroff sub-

[12] See letter of March 21, 1840, to M. A. Günzberg, published in *Ost und West,* 1910, 379-82. See also Hebrew letter of date July 22, 1842, to N. Rosenthal, published in *Leket Amarim,* 1889.

[13] A vivid description of the impression made by Lilienthal on the rising generation of Russian Jews may be found in the autobiography entitled *Memoiren einer Grossmutter,* by Pauline Wengeroff, I, 118-137 (Berlin, 1908).

mitted to the czar in March, 1841, a document entitled "Decrees for the Jews", in which it was set forth that such schools would lessen the influence of the Talmud among the Jews and bring them nearer the people of the country and the reigning faith. The emperor stamped this document with his approval by the words in his own handwriting, "The principles are sound". At the same time he promised to do all he could for the education of the Jews of his realm.

Before proceeding further with the narrative it may be well to say a word about the purpose of the emperor and his ministers in this matter of founding modern schools for the Jews, as evidenced by the statement of the emperor just quoted, namely, that the principles of the ministerial document were sound. Many Jews were suspicious of the sincerity of the government; they looked upon the whole plan as a proselytizing scheme. Such claimed that the emancipation of the Jews, and this alone, would prove the sincerity of the government in its educational projects for the Jews. The entire attitude of the emperor justified them in their suspicions. His efforts as ruler were directed towards the realization of his motto: "One country, one language, one church". It was these justifiable suspicions that proved the most difficult obstacle for Lilienthal to overcome. When, for example, at the meeting held in Vilna for the consideration of the plan, he was asked the question by one of the members present, "What guarantee can you offer us that our religion will not be interfered with?" he answered: "You know a great deal better than I that I am unable to offer you any guarantee on the part of the department. The emperor's will reigns supreme and autocratic; he can recall today what he

promised yesterday; he changes his officers and their systems whenever he pleases; how should I, an humble stranger, be able to offer you a guarantee? I am not empowered to do it. All that I can promise you as your coreligionist is, that I shall not go a step further in promoting the plans of the government before having obtained the assurance that nothing will be undertaken against our holy religion, that I shall lay down my office as soon as I shall become convinced to the contrary and that no offense on the part of my brethren shall excuse me for breaking the promise I am giving you at this solemn hour".[14]

In one of his conversations with Uwaroff, Lilienthal communicated to the minister this fear of the Jews that the emperor's educational plan was merely a blind for wholesale conversion and that it was not sincerely meant. When asked how these apprehensions might be removed, he answered: "To grant at once their emancipation; or if the government considers this step a hasty one, to grant them at least some favors, convincing them unquestionably that their religious rights will not be infringed upon, nor their liberties be curtailed further, and that a bright, hopeful future is in store for them."[15] Uwaroff now assured him that the emperor's intentions were only for the welfare of his Jewish subjects. That he trusted thoroughly in the representations of Uwaroff that there was no ulterior conversionist purpose in the plan there can not be the least doubt, for as soon as, to his dismay, he became convinced to the contrary, he left the country, as shall appear in the sequel.

[14] *My Travels in Russia.* Infra, p. 247.
[15] Ibid.

We have a contemporary account from Lilienthal's own hand of the steps that led to his call to St. Petersburg from Riga and inaugurated directly his mission to his Russian coreligionists. In a letter to Ludwig Philippson dated February 14, 1842, he writes:

"It was the emperor's own idea—not having been submitted to him either by the Council of Ministers or the Imperial Cabinet—to open to his Russian Jews the door of hope to a happier future, through the agency of a freer, more scientific education permeated with the spirit of religion, in place of the former, purely Talmudical instruction. He, the ruler of the greatest empire in the world's history, whose fatherly heart and imperial soul provide for millions, turned his merciful eye to this poor, wretched people, and with the energy, the acumen and the wisdom which so brilliantly distinguish Russia's politics, His Serene Majesty commanded the ministers concerned to examine into the present status of the Jews, to institute the necessary deliberations, and to submit the suggestions resulting therefrom to him for examination and approval.

"The ministers took steps to carry out this command, and the first result of the deliberations which was made public was the formation of special committees in each general province in which Jews lived. There were six of these; since Jews live only in Liv- und Kurland, under the jurisdiction of the Governor-General Baron von Pahlen; in the provinces Vilna, Grodno, Minsk and Bialystok, under the Lieutenant-General Mirkowitsch; in Kief, Zhitomir and Volhynia, under Lieutenant-General Bibikoff; in Bessarabia and Kherson, under the Adjutant-General Count Woronzeff; in Chernigof and Poltava, under

the Adjutant-General Prim Dolgonicki; and in Vitebsk and Mogilef, under the Lieutenant-General Diakoff.

"Several Jews were placed on every committee which was composed of a number of officials, and even though one of the chief subjects of the deliberations was the office and the duties of the new governmental rabbis[15] who were to be appointed, still all were commanded to express their opinion on the present state of the Jews and to offer suggestions for possible changes which would lead to an improvement of this condition.

"Until January, 1841, the documents had to be sent back to the Ministry of the Interior for examination by local authorities; further action was based upon their findings and suggestions.

"Shortly after the expiration of said term, the command of His Excellency, the Minister of Public Instruction Uwaroff, to journey at once to St. Petersburg to participate in the deliberations touching my service, was communicated to me through the Curator of the Educational District of Dorpat. Traveling and living expenses were paid me by the government and I made haste to reach the imperial city.

"His Excellency, the Minister, received me for the first time on Saturday evening at seven o'clock. This evening hour was set for me in order that my visit might be undisturbed by other visits and audiences; this first conference lasted three hours. I had the opportunity that evening to learn to honor and admire the humane man in the great statesman. In words of real concern, he pictured the neglect and the debase-

[15] The so-called crown rabbis who, as government officials, are the recognized intermediaries between the government and the Jewish communities.

ment of the Jewish people in Russia, and betrayed in every portrayal the keen judge, the thorough student of the character of this nation. In most eloquent speech he praised the great thoughts of the exalted ruler, the many hopes, the blessed results which would ensue therefrom; and true joy beamed from every feature as he began to explain to me the part which had been assigned also to him in the great work of humanity through the establishment of a Jewish school system.

"A double task was assigned me by His Excellency during my five weeks' sojourn in the ministry: first, to place myself into communication with the most famous Jews of Germany, in order to learn the number of such as would accept a call to the schools to be established; and, secondly, to participate in the elaboration of the necessary preliminaries, plans, outlines, etc., under the constant personal supervision of the minister himself.

"The work proceeded rapidly under the interested direction of the minister, while we looked for the replies which were to reach us from Germany and waited to learn what impression the large-hearted project of the monarch would make on the German Jews.

"Addresses of thanks and enthusiastic communications dictated by the most sincere admiration were sent to the monarch from several congregations in Germany and were received graciously; letters were written to the minister by the most celebrated Jewish litterateurs, and utterance was given to the warmest appreciation of the high aim of his efforts. The appointments were to follow in short order, it was promised. Since the purpose of my presence in St.

Petersburg was now fulfilled, I was dismissed by His Excellency; but I received the command to remain in uninterrupted communication with the department of the ministry, and to await further instructions.

"I returned to Riga on the sixth of March of last year (1841) and through the good offices, particularly of Doctors Philippson, Jost, Geiger, Mannheimer,[16] Auerbach, etc., I received the names of over two hundred men who were willing to emigrate under favorable conditions and offers and to accept the positions that were to be created. The warm participation of foreign coreligionists in the lot of the Russian Jews, the correct understanding of the emperor's idea, the thorough comprehension of the plans and purposes of the large-hearted minister were duly appreciated, and the necessary steps were taken at once to secure the information prescribed by law concerning the foreign candidates. The first difficulties had been overcome, it is true, but since matters can not be settled so readily in the great domain of Russia as in the small kingdoms of Germany, but require a careful consultation on the manner of accommodation to the most diverse local conditions, the desired call could not be issued to the foreigners as quickly as they wished. And while matters were proceeding here towards their solution quietly but slowly, a rumor which was with-

[16] Philippson himself was willing to come to Russia to assist in the great task which aroused his utmost enthusiasm; so also Jost; Geiger declined to go, although he offered his good offices in aiding young men who might desire to go; Mannheimer and Sulzer volunteered to train young men in preaching and in the liturgy of the Viennese temple so as to fit them for positions in Russia. See Hessen, *Die russische Regierung und die westeuropäischen Juden—Zur Schulreform in Russland,* 1840-44, pp. 10 ff. (St. Petersburg, 1913).

out any foundation spread through Germany that the project had been abandoned and all further consultation had been dropped.

"However, instead of this being the case, I was occupied during the past year with the most diverse commissions which had been entrusted to me by the ministry, and we recognized herein the quiet beginnings of the undertaking which merely awaited the favorable opportunity in order to proceed to its solution.

"This came when the honorary citizen, Nissin Rosenthal, of Vilna, while in St. Petersburg, was commissioned by His Excellency at his own request to bring me to Vilna in order that I might either induce that Jewish community to found a free school or smooth out the differences between the already existing schools which were under the supervision of the said Mr. Rosenthal and a Mr. Klatzko."[17]

In Vilna, largely through the active and enthusiastic support of Rosenthal, Klatzko and their friends among the *Maskilim,* Lilienthal succeeded in gaining the endorsement of the community for the governmental plan. From Vilna he proceeded to Minsk, having received an invitation from the Jewish leaders of that city to come there. The Jewish community of this city had shown no sympathy whatsoever with the *Haskala* movement, but quite the contrary; most active opposition had been evinced against any and all such attempts. Lilienthal's friends and admirers among the *Maskilim* of Vilna, fearing that the invitation to come to Minsk was a plot to lure him from Vilna and to devise some scheme against him that

[17] *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums,* VI, 602-611.

would prevent the further prosecution of his work, implored him not to proceed to that city. They pointed out to him that he would be friendless there and in a hotbed of opposition and enmity. He felt, however, so secure in the strength of his mission and his ability to present it, that he proceeded undaunted to this stronghold of *Chassidism* and rigid orthodoxy. Here his reception was altogether different from that accorded to him in Vilna. He was bitterly insulted. It appeared at times that even his life was in danger. The fanatics mocked him, following him through the streets and shouting derisively, "Get thee gone, shaven one;[18] get thee gone". The meeting at which he set forth his plans was very stormy; all his eloquence availed him naught. He was utterly defeated. The reactionaries carried the day and Lilienthal left Minsk to return to Vilna, feeling that the task he had undertaken would prove most difficult of fulfillment. The effect of his defeat at Minsk proved disastrous in Vilna. During his absence, his enemies had been active. They succeeded in reversing the sentiment of the community. Lilienthal, noting the change, asked that another meeting be called at which he might present his cause a second time, and possibly win over the people once again. He pleaded in vain. No second assembly was called. His experience in Minsk and his second attempt at Vilna convinced him that he must labor hard indeed to gain the Jewish communities for his cause.

He returned to St. Petersburg; in reporting his

[18] Being clean shaven, Lilienthal was looked upon with suspicion by the Russian Jews, who cut neither the corners of their hair nor their beards in obedience to the command: Lev. xix, 27.

failure at Minsk to Count Uwaroff, he took a most noble attitude. He exonerated his persecutors from all blame and urged the minister not to visit any displeasure upon them.

During his sojourn at St. Petersburg where he arrived in April, 1842, he worked out in conjunction with the department of the Ministry of Education the plan for the organization of Jewish education. As a result of these deliberations, the edict containing the following provisions was promulgated July 4:

1. All schools and institutions of learning of the Jews, whatever be the name by which they are designated, not even excepting those in which the instruction deals with the learned interpretation of the Mosaic law and of their sacred books, as well as such as are devoted to the education of the young, being under the jurisdiction of this department, are to be reorganized in accordance with the general educational regulations prevailing throughout the empire.

2. To carry out this plan a commission, consisting of four rabbis, is to be established here in St. Petersburg. They are to be selected with the approval of the minister and the governors-general of the four provinces whose population consists practically altogether of Jews.

3. The work of the commission is to reorganize intellectually the Jews living in the Russian empire. After performing this important task, the commission is to be discharged, but the members will receive adequate compensation for their labors.[19]

Lilienthal was now commissioned to visit the Jewish communities of Russia to acquaint them with the

[19] *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums,* VI, 529.

provisions of this edict, to induce them to accede peaceably to the governmental plan and to elect the members of the rabbinical commission as provided for in the edict. He was to undertake this journey as the representative of the government; his journey was to proceed through all the provinces inhabited by the Jews.

In the fourth paragraph of the letter of instructions issued to him,[20] the assurance is given that the religion of the Jews was not to be interfered with. Lilienthal had demanded that this be included in order that all suspicions might be dispelled and the consent of the Jews to the plan be thus obtained the more readily.

Before embarking on this all-important journey, he issued his famous address to the Russian Jews, entitled "Maggid Jeshuah"[21] (The Announcer of Salva-

[20] This letter of instruction is included in full in Lilienthal's *My Travels in Russia;* infra, p. 331-3.

[21] The address called forth an anonymous rejoinder entitled *Maggid Emeth* (The Announcer of the Truth). The writer of this answer is actuated by a bitter spirit of enmity and opposition to Lilienthal; he claims that Lilienthal desired merely to ingratiate himself with the rich, that he was hypocritical in that he was most punctilious in observing every ceremony in order to curry favor with the orthodox. Kahana, whose article on Lilienthal and the Haskalah (in *Hashiloach,* XXVII, 314-22, 446-57, 546-56) is distinctly antagonistic, claims that this rejoinder was written by the famous Maskil, M. A. Günzberg, to whom Lilienthal showed himself most ungrateful after Günzberg had aided him with his influence. It has been pointed out that M. A. Günzberg could not have written this rejoinder because in a later publication *Kikayon Deyonah* he criticizes the *Maggid Emeth* for the attack on Lilienthal (Scheinhaus *Ein deutscher Pionier*). Either Scheinhaus is correct in his contention, which seems most probable, or if not, and Günzberg did write the *Maggid*

tion). This remarkable document created a great stir among the Jews of Russia. It was in this address to his coreligionists that he announced the purpose of the government to convene the commission on Jewish education that was to have four members elected by the Jews themselves who were to work out the plan for the schools that were to be established for the education of the Jewish young. He called upon his coreligionists to take advantage of the humane and well-intentioned purposes of the government. If they failed to avail themselves of this great opportunity their enemies would find comfort and justification in the claim that the wretched condition of the Russian Jews was their own fault and was due to their ignorance and superstition.

Towards the end of July, 1842, Lilienthal started forth on what may be called his propagandist journey to win the Jews to the governmental plan of reforming the Jewish educational system. His progress was almost in the nature of a triumphal march. He visited Voloshin, the seat of the most famous *Yeshibah* in Russia; Minsk, Lubowitz, a stronghold of the *Chassidim,* Grodno, Berdichef, Mogilef, Kherson, Kishinef and Odessa. He was greeted everywhere with acclaim. The suspicions which had been entertained of the purity of his purpose had largely vanished. His generous attitude in defending the Jews of Minsk against Uwaroff's displeasure because of their unfriendly reception of himself on the occasion of his first visit gained the sympathy of many for the cause which he represented. His success in gaining the con-

Emeth, his later statements must be considered in the light of a retraction of the *Maggid Emeth,* involving thus a clearing of Lilienthal from the charges there made.

sent of Rabbi Isaac ben Hayyim, the head of the *Yeshibah* at Voloshin, to serve as one of the four members of the commission that was to meet in St. Petersburg to work out the plan for the schools, was of incalculable aid to him. No Jew in all Russia was held in higher esteem by his coreligionists than was the learned head of this great academy of Voloshin that numbered its students by the hundreds. Rabbi Isaac or Reb Itzele, as he was familiarly called, represented the finest type of the Talmudical scholar; he was a truly wise man endowed with breadth of vision, and gifted with the traits of the real leader. Lilienthal's description of his interview with this fine example of a fast-vanishing type forms one of the most interesting chapters in his fascinating account of his travels.[22]

He had been accompanied to Voloshin by representatives of the Jewish communities of Vilna and Minsk. When these men witnessed the kindly reception of Lilienthal by the man whom they held in reverence above all others, they became enthusiastic supporters of the cause which Lilienthal was advocating. Notably did the effect of Rabbi Isaac's support appear in the changed attitude of the community of Minsk. But little more than six months previously the *"Datschel"*, as he was contemptuously termed, had left Minsk in disgrace and utterly discredited. Now all was altered. The leading men of the community declared in favor of his plans. Sympathy and respect were shown him on all hands where formerly he had met with distrust and aversion. The Russian Jews had become convinced that he was not a governmental agent using the plea

[22] Infra, *My Travels in Russia*, p. 344 ff.

for educational reform as a cloak for the conversion of their children to Christianity as his unscrupulous enemies had declared,[23] but a true Jew, fired with a noble purpose. Even the *Chassidim,* most fanatical of all his opponents, were won over in so far as one of their most renowned leaders, Mendel Schneersohn of Lubowitz, consented to serve as one of the four members of the commission that was to meet in St. Petersburg.

Wherever he went he was greeted as a great leader; his eloquence and sincerity carried all before him; he was hailed as a brilliant star that was shedding light upon the communities of Israel. The people acclaimed him as a deliverer and his words were received joyfully as the prophecy of a better and brighter future. A letter from the representatives of the Jewish community of Berdichef to his father may well be inserted here to indicate the enthusiasm that was aroused by this brilliant, youthful leader. The letter reads:

> Most respected Sir:
>
> Voices of joy resound in Israel and *one* question is being asked throughout Russia's immeasurable domain: "Whose son is this hero, this mighty one who has set forth armed for the strife, announcing help to his oppressed people, so that its horn of happiness may be exalted once again and its rights be assured in the eyes of its rightful ruler? Whose son indeed is this man, who puts forth his good right arm in order to raise Israel from his despised state and who left

[23] Infra, *My Travels in Russia,* p. 323. See also *Orient,* 1844, p. 460.

his fatherland, his birthplace and his father's house to shine in Israel? Whose son indeed may he be whom the high and exalted government received with marks of respect and who alone was found worthy to accomplish the great work?" It is Dr. Max Lilienthal, the learned and esteemed teacher who left behind him everything that was dear and precious and journeyed to a strange land to aid his dispersed brethren. The eyes of every true believer in Israel shed tears of joy and every heart is deeply moved at the sight of this young hero taking upon himself thus early in life the yoke of his people with such divine courage.

We, also, the inhabitants of the great and populous city of Berdichef, were greatly honored by the presence of this highly respected man in our midst. This brilliant star that illumines Israel's gloomy dwelling places shone also upon us. This happiness, never before experienced by us, was heightened by the pleasant and glowing notices of his great and effective deeds in behalf of his coreligionists.

Therefore, we, the representatives of the local Jewish community, feel called upon to offer our reverential greeting and our deepest homage to you, the happiest of fathers, who have reared such noble shoots of love and glory for the vineyard of the Lord that flourishes as a mighty defense and protection for all Israel. May eternal happiness and lasting blessing accrue to you through this most noble son, whose sacred efforts for our highest good will never be forgotten even in the latest days. Time will never efface his immortal name, for even our grandchildren will think of

it with holy awe and keep it in eternal recollection; thus will the great and imperishable name of the high-souled hero, Lilienthal, be added to those noble champions of yore who gladly sacrificed wealth and life for the Jews and Israel, and be ever revered as are they.

Yet how can we approach you, most respected sir? For truly our lips are struck dumb because of our overpowering joy of soul, and our tongues are powerless to indicate in even weak accents our deeply felt emotions; still we beg you to accept our most heartfelt thanks in the name of the Lord and in the name of the entire Jewish community. May our merciful Father continue to favor you with his unending blessings for a long time to come; may He protect you and strengthen your precious life with youthful vigor and permit you to enjoy undisturbed the purest joys of the soul, so that in a time far off grandchildren may surround you who will devote their life to the weal of Israel like unto your great son, this exalted prototype. Accept, we pray you, O worthy father of the most worthy son, these weak words from distant lands as the surest sign of our deep respect for you, inasmuch as we indulge the hope that we may be able to attest even more fully our homage and our veneration in the future.

The Representatives of the Israelitsch
community of Berdichef.

The fifteenth day of Cheshwan of the year 5603.[24] Extravagant though this letter sounds, it is yet a true reflex of the sentiments aroused among thousands

[24] *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums,* VI, pp. 715-6.

of Russian Jews of those days whose hearts beat high with hopes of the improvement that the coming years would bring through the instrumentality of Lilienthal's work.

Greatly encouraged by the enthusiastic reception which he had met with everywhere, Lilienthal returned to St. Petersburg to give report to Uwaroff of the success of the journey. Besides Rabbi Isaac, the head of the Voloshin *Yeshibah,* and Mendel Schneersohn, the *Chassidaic* leader, the Jews had chosen as members of the commission of four that was to elaborate the plan, Israel Heilprin, a banker of Berdichef, and Basilius (Bezalel) Stern, the director of the Jewish school at Odessa. This commission was representative indeed, as these four men stood for the different tendencies among Russia's Jews, the rabbinical, the Chassidaic and the modern. Lilienthal himself was commissioned by the government to participate in the deliberations.

In order to convince the Jews further through the personnel of the commission that the government was acting in good faith, Lilienthal induced Uwaroff to permit him to invite the two best-known Jews in the world, Moses Montefiore of London, and Adolphe Cremieux of Paris, to become members of the commission. Lilienthal wrote to both. His letter to Montefiore was submitted to Uwaroff for his approval and was stamped with the official seal. This may explain why, in his gloomy description of the moral status of the Russian Jews, Lilienthal blames the Jews themselves for this. Lilienthal knew at this time how hopeless the legal position of the Jews in Russia was. Those portions of the letter deserve especial attention in which Lilienthal informs Montefiore that the gov-

ernment has the intention of improving the political situation of the Jews. This did not take place. The political situation of the Jews proceeded from bad to worse. Montefiore returned a very guarded answer; he may have felt that Lilienthal had been unable to tell him the whole truth; he bade him give him further particulars about the plan of the work so that he might decide whether he could be of any assistance in the work of school reform.[25]

Lilienthal must have had some private correspondence with Montefiore, for two months later a letter was received from Montefiore's secretary, Dr. L. Loewe, to the effect that Montefiore was ready to come to Russia that winter to take part in the work of the commission; he made the condition, however, that the invitation of the ministry must come to him through the Russian embassy in London. Loewe's letter remained unanswered.

Cremieux declared his willingness to come if he would be invited in the name of the czar.[26] This was not done, and neither of these illustrious men sat with the commission as Lilienthal had hoped would be the case.

The commission began its meetings in St. Petersburg in April, 1843, under the supervision of the Ministry of Public Education, and continued in session until August. Naturally there had to be much give and take. It had been hoped that a complete understanding would be reached, but this did not prove to be the case. The men forming the commis-

[25] Hessen, *Die Russische Regierung und die Westeuropäischen Juden*, p. 33. Montefiore's letter is published in Perejitoe, I, Appendix, p. 27-28 (St. Petersburg, 1908).

[26] Ibid, 28-29.

sion were far apart in their views. The discussions were heated. Rabbi Isaac and the Chassidaic leader, Mendel Schneersohn, were not in sympathy. Stern and Lilienthal indulged in vigorous debates. Still, in the end, all the members of the commission signed the report embodying the desires of the government as to the establishment of schools of the character of those already existing in Riga and Odessa. The commission also placed its approval upon the books to be used in the schools, a list of which had been submitted to them.

The edict for the establishment of these schools was issued on November 13, 1844. This edict commanded that elementary and high schools, or, as they were called, schools of the first and second class, were to be opened for Jewish children and the Jewish youth, and also that two seminaries for the education of rabbis and teachers were to be founded at Vilna and Zhitomir. A special tax was to be instituted for the support of these institutions, namely, the light tax; further, the profits of the two Jewish printing monopolies were to be applied to the upkeep of the two academies. This edict was prefaced by an address to the czar by Uwaroff, the Minister of Education. In the address he called attention to the measures taken by other governments for the amelioration of the condition of the Jews and urged that the time had now come for Russia to act in a similar manner. The best method to achieve this result lay in the establishment of a system of education for the Jews which should be accommodated to the exigencies of the Jewish situation and fitted to the Jewish religious views.

This last expression makes clear how successful Lilienthal had been in convincing Uwaroff of the prime

necessity of assuring the Jews that this educational reform was not a proselytizing scheme. Being satisfied on this score, the edict received the approval of many Jews, notably as it was based upon the report signed by the four men who had the confidence of their coreligionists throughout the realm. This approval went so far that the idea was entertained to commission the famous Jewish artist, M. Oppenheim of Frankfort, to paint a great historical picture that was to be a symbolical representation of the rise of the new era in Russian Jewry. This painting was to be presented to the emperor as a token of appreciation and gratitude.

However, the long time that had elapsed between the first correspondence entered into by Lilienthal in the spring of 1842 with German Jewish leaders asking their cooperation and the date of the issuance of the edict in November, 1844, had dampened the enthusiasm aroused in Germany. In fact, it was thought in Germany that the plan had been abandoned and Lilienthal felt compelled to write letters in which he explained that such matters proceed very slowly in Russia; he begged his German friends to have patience. When finally the schools were opened, Lilienthal's plan to have the schools manned by German teachers, which had been approved by Uwaroff, was repudiated by the government even though as many as two hundred German Jewish teachers had signified their willingness to come to Russia to help along this work. Such a procedure ill comported with the czar's program of russification. Instead of importing German teachers, it was decided to follow the plan of the Russian schools, patterning the elementary schools after the parochial schools, the higher schools after

the district schools and the rabbinical seminaries after the seminaries of the Greek Church.

The truth of the matter was that faith was not kept with Lilienthal. Despite the assurances of Uwaroff and other high officials that there was no desire to convert the Jews by the establishment of these schools, it appeared in the sequel that these assurances were not sincere. Uwaroff's first plans for the education of the Jews were kept secret and were not published for some time; they were unknown to Lilienthal. In this document Uwaroff stated that instruction in the specific Jewish branches must be minimized so that the present Jewish educational methods might be displaced by instruction in the catechism; instruction in the Talmud was to be only a pretense and the religious and philosophical Jewish commentaries were to be dropped at the first opportunity.[26]

It may be that because of his contact with Lilienthal Uwaroff may have changed his ideas as expressed in this original plan and have been sincere in the assurances he gave that there was no desire to proselytize. This may account for the fact that the edict of November, 1844, was scarcely promulgated ere Uwaroff was relieved of his office and the carrying out of the plan was committed to other men who had had no share in the initial work. These men had no appreciation of the situation. When the schools were finally established, Christians were made inspectors. These inspectors had no conception of the delicacy and seriousness of the task. They had no sympathy with the work as far as it was in the interest of the Jews. True, the teachers of the Jewish branches were Jews.

[26] Scheinhaus, *Ein deutscher Pioneer, Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums,* 1911, p. 439.

Many of these were incompetent. Such as were capable had constant difficulties on the one hand with the Christian inspectors and on the other hand with the *Melammedim* or old-style Jewish teachers whose occupation was seriously interfered with by the establishment of these schools.

The government, too, was greatly at fault. It was imagined that the Jews would be entirely satisfied if these schools were called Jewish schools, if they would be closed on the Sabbath and the holy days, and the Jewish ceremonies would be observed. However, the only Jewish instruction was the teaching of selected portions of the Pentateuch with German translation; the other portions of the Bible were neglected; the ritual laws were not taught; the prayers were not explained; the Talmud was excluded altogether; there was no instruction in the religion or history of the Jews. The Jewish spirit, too, was lacking in the school administration. All this Lilienthal had provided for in his plan to inaugurate the work with a large number of competent, learned and scholarly men who had been trained in modern methods in Germany. This understanding with Uwaroff was repudiated by the new minister of education and his appointees who administered this new work.

Further, several new edicts against the Jews were issued during this period, notably the dread ukase by which Nicholas I delimited the dwelling places of the Jews to within fifty versts of the frontier, the source of untold suffering and inhuman repression. The leopard had not changed his spots despite the seeming good will expressed in the documents concerned with the government's educational plans for the Jews.

Little wonder then that the Jews had their sus-

picions reawakened as to the sincerity of the government's professions. Little wonder, too, that Lilienthal gradually awakened to the fact that the government's pretended interest in the Jews was hypocritical. The great work for the welfare of his coreligionists on which he had embarked with such high hopes and such glowing enthusiasm had fallen far short of his expectations. Still he was willing to remain in Russia and to work for and with his coreligionists. He had been elected preacher of the great congregation in Odessa, a post, however, which he did not enter upon.

In December, 1844, he had written his fiancee to make ready for their marriage in the following May. In this letter he advised her to provide herself with heavy furs required by the rigors of the Russian climate. It was evidently his intention to bring his bride to Russia. What was it then that made him decide to go to America instead of returning to Russia after his marriage as was surely his intention at the time this letter was written?

In a recent book on Lilienthal's work in Russia, it is stated that the reason that impelled him to leave the country suddenly was that he was approached with the proposal that he become a convert to the Greek Catholic Church.[27] If this be true, as is possible, one can well imagine the indignation with which the suggestion was received. That some such impression was abroad at the time appears from a contemporary statement. In a communication from Koenigsberg on the situation of the Jews in Russia in the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* of December 31, 1845, the writer says: "Dr. Lilienthal himself, who sojourned in St. Peters-

[27] Hessen, *Die Russische Regierung und die Westeuropäischen Juden*, p. 33.

burg for a number of years with the purpose of promulgating foreign culture in Russia, was compelled to emigrate to America, when he recognized finally that it was impossible for him to achieve any real results for the improvement of the lot of his coreligionists owing to the repressive laws of the country and when the attempt was made to persuade him himself to become converted to the state church".[28] A statement in a letter which he wrote to his friend, Dr. Ludwig Philippson, shortly after his arrival in the United States, seems to bear out this report; the opening paragraph of that communication, dated December 31, 1845, reads: "The Lord, to whom I sacrificed my position in Russia, for whose holy name I surrendered livelihood, honors and a life position, He, the Father of all, to whom I entrusted my fate, and who forsakes none who trust in Him, has helped me in His mercy and has given me a second great sphere of activity".[29]

A writer in the Jewish periodical, the *Orient,* had for years pursued Lilienthal with bitter diatribes and base insinuations, among them being the outrageous charge that he was responsible for the promulgation of the anti-Jewish ukase, inasmuch as he did not really sympathize with the Russian Jews, but was more or less an agent of the government. These statements led Philippson to affix the following editorial comment to Lilienthal's statement quoted above: "We can not refrain from calling the attention of the public to the fact that this letter is a complete reply to the shameless invectives which a Jewish newspaper has directed for years at Dr. Lilienthal. Would that the oppor-

[28] Article reproduced in *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums,* X, p. 56.

[29] Ibid, p. 98.

tunity were always at hand to prove the groundlessness of similar slanders in so short and so complete a manner!"

I have found but one more statement by Lilienthal himself referring to the reason for his leaving Russia. In this statement he says nothing whatsoever about any conversionist attempt. In an article written many years later entitled, "The Russian Government and the Jews—My Personal Experiences", he refers to the terrible ukase of Nicholas I, issued in April, 1843, which decreed that no Jews even in the Pale of Settlement could live within fifty versts of the frontier and that all Jews within that territory must leave their homes and settle in the cities within the Pale. When this ukase was issued the Commission on Jewish Education was sitting in St. Petersburg. All efforts were put forth to have the ukase revoked. The Council of Ministers petitioned the emperor unanimously to do so. Continuing Lilienthal writes: "Count Kankrin sent for me on the evening after this meeting and with a face radiant with joy, informed me of the good news and the noble action of the council. I communicated it at once to the Israelites, then staying at St. Petersburg, and there was a rejoicing as if a second Purim had been instituted.

"But a few days afterwards I received a note from Councilor Wrontshenko to call on him at once, and when I entered his room, with a downcast air he told me that the emperor had rejected the petition of the council, and that all hope for a repeal was gone. I then made up my mind to leave the imperial service and in July, 1845, I left St. Petersburg for the shores of the land of human right and liberty."[30]

[30] *Jewish Times* (New York, January 28, 1870).

Whatever may have been the immediate reason for his departure there can be no doubt that he had become convinced of the insincerity of the Russian government in the matter of the welfare of the Jews. True, the educational system for the introduction of which he had labored with might and main was established after a fashion, but, oh, so differently from what he had intended. His bright dreams for a real renaissance among Russian Jews vanished into thin air. Thoroughly disheartened and discouraged he left Russia for America. His career that had dawned so brilliantly seemed to have set in darkness. But he was not quite thirty years old. Although he felt it not, life was still all before him.

CHAPTER III.

FIRST YEARS IN AMERICA.

Heartsick and disappointed, Lilienthal left Russia in July, 1845, for Munich. The five years of his life that he had devoted to the cause of bettering the lot of his brethren in Russia had been apparently wasted. He had believed in the sincerity of the czar and of Uwaroff. He could not conceive at the time that this whole plan of Jewish education was merely a proselytizing scheme and that it had been approved by the czar with the thought that ultimately it would bring the Jews into the arms of the church. Although the plans were slow in maturing, Lilienthal considered this incidental to the gradual perfecting of the work at which he had labored so whole-heartedly with the apparent approval of Uwaroff and his imperial master. As late as December, 1844,[1] he wrote to his fiancee of his purpose of bringing her back with him to Russia after their marriage. "I will take the first steamer for Stettin", he wrote, "thence to Berlin, by train to Leipzig and from there to Munich. My sojourn there will be about three weeks. My service here will not permit me to remain longer unless I receive instructions from the Crown which may lengthen my stay in Berlin." He also speaks of the governmental appointment that he had received which undoubtedly made him feel that his future life was to be spent in Russia. But as was pointed out in the last chapter,

[1] Supra, p. 42.

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(Aet. 40)

this was not to be. It is probable that after this letter was written, the infamous proposal was made to him to become a convert to the church. At any rate, whatever may have been the cause, he left Russia never to return. Shortly after his arrival in Munich he married the remarkable girl to whom he had been betrothed ten years. From all accounts Pepi Nettre was of singular charm—a woman of great culture and intelligence. In his *Reminiscences* Isaac M. Wise, who, upon his arrival in New York in 1846, was welcomed heartily in the home of Dr. Lilienthal, speaks of her as a woman "whom I had frequent opportunity of admiring as the most lovable and amiable of wives and mothers; she who surpassed even Munich's daughters in charm; who with clear insight penetrated into the very heart of conditions and persons and cast a glamour of love on all about her".[2]

Lilienthal had expected to place his wife who had waited for him all these years in a brilliant position. Now, however, he was without prospects. The Russian career was definitely closed. A German rabbinical post, even if one had offered itself, had no attractions for him. The new world, the land of freedom and opportunity, beckoned to him. Thither several members of the family had already emigrated, his sister Sophie and her husband, Dr. John Lehmeier, and his brother Samuel, who had married Caroline Nettre, the sister of Pepi. Even while in Russia, Lilienthal had written strikingly about the possibilities of America for the Jews. In a letter to Isaac Nettre, his future father-in-law, of the date of July 5, 1843, he had advised that he send his young son Philip to America,

[2] *Reminiscences,* by Isaac M. Wise, p. 20 (Cincinnati, 1901).

because the young man who contemplated the practice of law would find opportunities such as were undreamed of in France or Germany. "Now that Germans of high character are gaining an upper hand in the North American free states. . . . now that the western colonies or states are making such rapid strides forward, a future of industrial and commercial activity is to be looked for, such as is not likely in Germany and in Europe where narrow-minded materialism is on the increase. . . . I hope nothing for the Jews in Europe—everything in America".

These being his sentiments, it is not surprising that he determined to seek a new career in this land of promise. He arrived in New York in November, 1845, shortly after he had attained his thirtieth year. Though so young he was one of the best-known Jewish leaders in the world. He came to the United States with a great reputation. His career in Russia had made him a man of mark. The impression he created may be gathered from the words used by Isaac Leeser, the most prominent Jewish minister in the United States at that time, after hearing an address by Lilienthal. Leeser speaks of this address as "one of the best orations we ever listened to. It was the first time we ever heard him address an audience in his native tongue, the elegant and flexible language of Germany, and we can freely say that he fully confirmed to our mind the reputation which induced the community at Riga in Russia to send for him as their preacher, and also justified Uwaroff, the minister of education to Nicholas, to consult with him on Jewish affairs".[3]

[3] *Occident*, VII, 515.

In appearance Lilienthal was every inch the leader; he was tall and stately and his demeanor gave evidence of the courtly surroundings in which he had moved for years. A man of culture and force, he soon began to make his influence felt in his new home. Leaders in Jewry were few in the United States in those days. Although there were not many congregations, still there were fewer rabbis. Religious affairs were in a chaotic condition, as appears from the vivid description penned by the life-long friend and coworker of Lilienthal.[4]

Despite the unpromising state of affairs in Jewish congregational life, Lilienthal indulged the greatest hopes for the Jew and Judaism in the United States from the very moment that he stepped foot upon these shores. One of the dominating features of his activity was his love of America, as the home of religious liberty and the land of freedom. He was intense in this and time and again in spoken address and written word he eulogized the American spirit. This was due possibly to his Russian career. The contrast in his own experience between Russian despotism and American liberty was so great that it could not but color all his thoughts and acts. He appreciated to the full all that America represented for humanity. The first recorded words that he wrote from the United States indicate this clearly and sound the first clear note in that hymn of praise of America which he continued intoning to the very end of his life. In a letter written to his friend Ludwig Philippson very shortly after his arrival he says: "My fraternal and friendly greetings from New York, from the blessed land of freedom,

[4] Isaac M. Wise, *Reminiscences,* 20 ff.

the beautiful soil of civic equality! Old Europe with its restrictions lies behind me like a dream; the memory of the repellant Judaeophobia of Russia is like a distant mirage; the frightful images of oppression and persecution are distant from the harried soul—I breathe freely once more, my spirit unfolds its pinions and I would waft exultingly the heartiest kiss of brotherhood to all men who find here the bond of union! . . . Oh, it is necessary that you breathe this free air of Columbia in order that you may be able to understand the pride and joy of her children; you must have shaken off the centuried dust of the old Jewish oppression in order to appreciate to the full the feeling 'I am a man like every other'; you must see here our Jewish brethren, the persecuted emigrants of persecuting Europe, in order to become convinced how worthily the Jew cooperates with his Christian brethren here. . . .

"Here nothing is known of the puppet play of nationalism which divides men and confines them within the narrow lines of self-interest; the name of this country is union of the states and its motto is union of all forces for a great end, the respect of the rights of each in the great brotherhood. Here nothing is known of the idea of a Christian state which after creating pariahs, brands them as pariahs; here men are known only as men, who respect one another in liberty and equality and work together for the common weal."[5]

Life had a new interest for him. What though his efforts in Russia had spelt failure owing to the religious bigotry of Nicholas, here was a prospect for

[5] *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums,* X, 18-20.

work equally important and promising, to be a leading influence in shaping the future of Judaism in a great land, where the Jew had opportunities such as he had never known since the ancient days. Such an outlook for usefulness might well stir the blood of the young, but experienced, leader who had now appeared in American Jewish life. He had gained much knowledge of life and of men in his career among the diplomats of Russia and in the Jewish communities there; he was gifted with eloquence of tongue and with the power of presenting his thoughts in a manner attractive and convincing. He was ready to work for his brethren and to devote his great powers to the cause of his faith. He had scarcely appeared in New York ere the opportunity became his to enter actively into the life for which he had fitted himself. There were four German Jewish congregations in the city, only one of which was ministered to by a rabbi, namely, the Emanuel congregation of which Dr. Leo Merzbacher was rabbi. The other three German congregations were the Anshe Chesed, the Shaare Shomayim and the Rodef Shalom. One week after his arrival in New York, Lilienthal was invited to preach before the Anshe Chesed congregation. How his reputation had preceded him appears from the notice in the daily press to the effect that "Dr. Lilienthal, chief rabbi of Russia (sic!) will give a lecture in the Synagog Anshe Chesed next Saturday," etc. On the following Sabbath he preached also before the other two congregations. After hearing him, the three congregations combined their forces and at a joint meeting held on December 28, 1845, elected him rabbi; in a letter announcing this fact he signs himself "chief rabbi" and as such he was known. He closes his letter by saying,

"I thank the Lord who has granted me the opportunity anew to proclaim and to teach His holy word."[6]

He was now fairly launched upon his new career. He was installed as chief rabbi of the three congregations on January 10, 1846. An interesting account of this event was written for the *Occident*[7] by James K. Gutheim,[8] at that time a teacher in New York. In this report of the inaugural sermon preached on that occasion, the writer states that the rabbi expressed his disapproval of the innovations introduced by the reform rabbis in Germany. In this first official utterance on American soil, Lilienthal took his stand on the basis of tradition, but he stated that although he would keep aloof from innovations, he would aim at securing decorum at the services. Lilienthal's later championing of reform caused him to be accused of inconsistency owing to his utterances in this inaugural and other sermons preached in New York. It will be well to make this matter clear at the outset. Although he thus began as a sympathizer with what is known as orthodoxy, still as he became better acquainted with American conditions he recognized the need of reform. In other words, he grew in liberal religious thought as the years advanced. His sympathies, however, were never with radicalism. He was a conservative reformer, if such a seemingly paradoxical phrase is permissible, to the end of his life. It was at first his belief that reforms could find their warrant in the Talmud, and he wrote copiously to this effect although later he abandoned this attempt. As time went on he

[6] *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums*, X, 98.

[7] Vol. III, 574-6.

[8] Later the distinguished rabbi of Temple Sinai, New Orleans.

became more and more outspoken in his reform position, as we shall see. But he was, above all, a man of peace, and in the many bitter contentions that marred the relations of the reform leaders in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, Lilienthal stood out as the peacemaker who attempted to smooth over the bitter expressions of the fiery Hotspurs. His motto was quiet development and orderly progress. During the period of his ministry in New York, about one year after he had entered upon his duties as rabbi, he diagnosed the situation in words which make very clear his own position as just indicated.

"Our century glorifies results and discoveries, like the railroad, the steamship and the magnetic telegraph; for their usefulness lies on the surface; our age probes no deeper. We theologians, swept along by this practical tendency, would like to discover spiritual steam machinery and telegraphs, so as to bring mankind to God and perfection in a trice. But this is quite impossible despite all the jolting and shaking, despite all the tearing down and building up; mankind requires time for its development, and whoever would judge it aright must be patient or else he will never comprehend it. If this patience in spiritual matters be necessary anywhere, it is particularly so here, where the seed has been sown so recently and is just beginning to sprout. If one has the gift of quiet, though by no means inactive, looking on he will surely not be dissatisfied with local conditions".[9]

This "gift of quiet though by no means inactive looking on" well describes his own attitude notably during these early years. Though unsympathetic with

[9] *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums,* XI, 364-6.

radical measures, he introduced almost at the start such reforms as he felt were necessary to make a religious appeal to a generation imbued with the spirit of free institutions. He preached regularly in German; in place of the *Hanoten Yeschuah,* the prayer for the government composed for monarchical conditions, he substituted a new prayer appropriate to the republican form of government. He organized a choir and formed a confirmation class; this was the first to be confirmed in the United States; the feast of Shabuot, 1846, was the date of this first confirmation; in speaking of these reforms he wrote: "Thus I hope with God's help to place our young congregations here in all things that touch our holy religion, on an equal footing with the best-organized congregations in the old world".[10]

He was very active not only in his own congregation, but in a wider sphere. As instances of this larger activity mention may be made of his success in inducing two small congregations in New Haven to unite, thus forming a single congregation, the Mishken Shalom, which adopted the rules and regulations of his New York congregations. He participated in the dedication of synagogs of numerous congregations, such as Emanuel of New York (April 14, 1848), the Friendship Hebrew of Baltimore (Sept. 15, 1848), the Beth El of Albany, New York (Oct. 3, 1851), the Ohabei Shalom of Boston, Mass. (Sept. 15, 1854).

He was largely instrumental in forming the first association of rabbis in the United States. This association known as the *Beth Din* was formed to render "beneficial service to the Jewish congregations of

[10] Ibid, X, 289-90.

America"; its purpose was not "to assume any hierarchical authority, but to act only in an advisory capacity". The members of this first American rabbinical organization were Max Lilienthal, who was chosen president, Isaac M. Wise, who acted as secretary, and Rabbis Felsenheld and Kohlmeyer. It was organized in October, 1846, and although it existed a very short time, still it is important as the first attempt at united action on the part of rabbis in this country; it is also significant for the fact that Isaac M. Wise, who had arrived recently in this country[11] presented at the first meeting of the Beth Din a plan for a *Minhag America* which it was hoped would be a union prayer book for American Jewish congregations. The reason for planning such a prayer book was that "daily experience teaches that dissensions in communities arise largely from the circumstance that every immigrant brings a particular *Minhag* from his European home; the German is unwilling to yield to the Pole, nor the latter to the Englishman, nor the last named to the Portuguese. This evil which prevents the peaceable development of the young congregations would be removed by a *Minhag America*".[12]

This evil was aggravated in succeeding years, notably in the reform congregations, by the fact that many reform rabbis of prominence issued their own individual prayer books. The desire for a union prayer book first expressed by the members of that earliest American rabbinical organization was realized just forty-eight years later when the Union Prayer Book

[11] In July, 1846.

[12] See Lilienthal's interesting account of the *Beth Din* and its purposes and aims, *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums*, XI, 364-6.

was issued by the Central Conference of American Rabbis in 1894, the prayer book now used by over three hundred congregations in the United States, comprising with few exceptions all the liberal congregations of the country. Truly, in this matter Lilienthal and Wise proved themselves men of vision. The *Beth Din* is also notable in that it was the first instance of cooperation on the part of these two great figures in American Jewry, who were destined to work together in the same community for many years in blessed and happy unity.

Although the *Beth Din* existed only a short time and achieved no actual results, still it deserves a place as marking a beginning of the attempt at Jewish religious organization in the United States.

During these early years of his life in America Lilienthal was active with his pen; in addition to the letters which he wrote for the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums,* which present a graphic picture of Jewish conditions in this country at that time, he also wrote the very valuable sketches of Jewish life in Russia entitled *"Russische Skizzen".* These sketches, which appeared in the same journal, furnish a remarkable diagnosis of the Jewish situation in Russia by a very keen observer; the events of the past thirty years have made the Russian Jewish question a burning issue in the United States and in all the countries of Europe. These descriptions, the first to be written by a western Jew about his coreligionists in Russia, are therefore of great interest, particularly as they demonstrate how thoroughly the writer understood the situation. There is little that has been written about the Russian Jews which displays a finer comprehension

than these sympathetic yet critical sketches written well-nigh seventy years ago.[13] They furnish a complete answer to the statement made by unfriendly critics of Lilienthal's mission in Russia that the reason for the failure of this mission lay in the fact that he did not understand the Russian Jews. This failure was due, as appeared abundantly in the foregoing chapter, to the just suspicions of the sincerity of the government on the part of the Russian Jews and to the opposition of the vast majority to any changes and reforms whatsoever. Even this latter opposition might have been overcome had the emperor, by emancipating the Jews, made it abundantly clear that he had no proselytizing purpose in mind.

He also wrote a number of articles for the *Asmonean,* a Jewish newspaper published in New York, over the signature L. D.[14] Among others mention should be made of three articles on "The Jews in Russia under Nicholas I",[15] and of another series entitled "Articles on Jewish Literature".[16] In the former series he throws much light on the aims and purposes of the Russian autocrat in his dealings with the Jews. Written in the light of subsequent reflection, these articles show that Lilienthal after his departure from Russia had come to the conclusion that Nicholas, whose sincerity he had thoroughly trusted in the mat-

[13] *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums,* IX, 525-26, 537-39, 552-54, 569-72, 586-88, 600-02; XI, 154-55, 213-15, 226-30, 547-49, 615-19, 683-86; XII, 232-33. See also *Occident,* V, 252-6, 359-60, 441-46, 491-96.

[14] *Asmonean,* X, 140, remark by editor: "The articles appearing in this journal over the initials L. D. are from the pen of Rev. Dr. Lilienthal."

[15] *Asmonean,* X, 84, 93, 101.

[16] *Asmonean,* X, 62, 77, 85, 94.

ter of organizing the Jewish school system in his empire, was really impelled by but one motive, viz.: the conversion of the Jews to the reigning religion. In a few sentences he sums up the situation finely: "The emperor has but one aim, the aggrandizement of his autocratic power; and the aim of the Jewish schools should be no other but to awaken in the breasts of the Jewish student the feelings of man's dignity and right, to arouse within him the ambition of rising to a more distinguished station of life; to bring him in contact with the higher classes of Russian society, to show him the pleasures of distinction, of rank and nobility, and when he has fitted himself for the desired advancement, to tell him 'You are a Jew, and a Jew can not attain these marks of imperial favor; be baptized by my priest and all the ways to honor, glory, pleasure and enjoyment are open to you.' . . . The poor Jewish student hearing on the one hand the allurements of the imperial seducer, and seeing on the other hand the continued tortures to which the Jew is and will be exposed, perceiving how the Jew is despised, so that 'damned Jew' has become a usual Russian nickname, forgets his duty to God and his religion, and in despair throws himself into the arms of the bloody Russian Church".[17]

Besides this literary activity, Lilienthal continued his work in that cause of education which ever remained dear to him by establishing a day school for the Jewish youth. This school to which he devoted most of his time and attention after retiring from the position of rabbi of the three congregations[18] was

[17] *Asmonean,* X, 100.

[18] He volunteered his services, however, to the Anshe Chesed congregation and continued to preach there.

known as the Hebrew Union School; its curriculum provided for instruction in both Hebrew and secular branches of study. This school[19] was attended not only by Jewish children of the city of New York, but also by young people from various parts of the country. Among these young people were a number of boys of prominent Jewish families in Cincinnati. When the Bene Israel congregation of that city sought a rabbi, the fathers of these boys, members of this congregation, urged the selection of Dr. Lilienthal. He preached his inaugural sermon before this congregation on July 14, 1855. The final stage of his career opened with his arrival in the western city. He became associated here with Isaac M. Wise, who had come to the city a year previously. Together these two great leaders toiled, each however, in his own way, for they were far different in disposition, character and method. Through their united work in the cause of Judaism, Cincinnati secured a preeminent place among the Jewish communities of the country. The names of these two men are linked together for all time in the story of the further development of Judaism not only in the city which became their home, but also in the entire country.

[19] *Occident,* V, 316. See also a description of the school and its work by Mordecai M. Noah, *Occident,* VIII, 424.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RABBI OF THE BENE ISRAEL CONGREGATION.

The activity of the new rabbi of the Bene Israel congregation expanded in many directions. Throughout the remaining twenty-seven years of his life he gave himself without stint and without measure to the service of his coreligionists and his fellowmen. He was a prominent figure in all Jewish public affairs as well as in the movements of a larger public interest. His own congregation, which had elected him for life, received as a matter of course his prime attention, but his work in the congregation proper constituted but a fraction of his activities. This congregational work, however, must be considered first in a review of his public activities.

When he took charge of the congregation it was orthodox in its form of worship and in its practices. As he had done in New York, he at once set himself to the task of introducing some reforms which tended to make the service more decorous. Shortly after his arrival in Cincinnati, the congregation, at a meeting held on August 5, 1855, voted to abolish the sale of *Mitzwot*,[1] the reading of *Piutim*[2] in the service, as well as the reading of the sections *Ezehu*

[1] The custom of selling to the highest bidder certain honors connected with the service.

[2] Liturgical poems which in the course of the centuries had been inserted in the prayer book.

Mekamon, Bameh Madlikin and *Pitum Haktoreth*.[3] This action aroused the bitter opposition of a section of the membership, which opposition grew during the following months because of the advocacy by the rabbi of the necessity of moderate reforms, notably of such a nature as would appeal to the rising youth born and bred in the free American environment. Not only from the pulpit did he give expression to these thoughts, but also in the columns of the Israelite, in the editing of which he was associated with Isaac M. Wise, the founder, during 1855-56. At the time that he was advocating these first reforms in his congregation he wrote an answer to orthodox calumnies under the caption "The Reformers Want to Uproot All!" the concluding words of which were, "The field in which reform has labored until now is the service in the synagogue, and every innovation introduced there has been justified by Talmudical quotations and Talmudical principles. It has really very little to do either with the eternally truthful doctrines or with the moral principles of our religion, whether the *Yekum Purkan* is said or not, whether the *Machzor* is recited or not, and with sorrow we are compelled to call it either ignorance or wilful blindness to make so much ado about nothing.

What the reform party proposes it proposes for the welfare of future generations; it wishes to prevent the endless desertions and splits, it wishes to banish the hideous indifference which has taken hold of a large portion of the Jewish community, it wishes to inspire the Jews with a new love for their religion, and with such intentions it does not fear senseless

[3] Some Tulmudical sections which had been incorporated in the prayer book.

and groundless insinuations, but trusts in Him who grants his best blessings to every just and sincere undertaking."[4]

It was along this line that he worked. He was never radical in his views; in fact, he was conservative by nature, but he felt that reform was necessary for the salvation of Judaism in the American environment. "Religion and life must be reconciled, is the supreme demand of our times and the just issue of all proposed reforms",[5] he wrote at this period of his career, and shortly thereafter in a similar strain, "Let us assist time in its travail for the birth of the future. Let us prepare and foster progress. Let us remove abuses by enlightenment and instruction and an impartial posterity will gratefully acknowledge our sincere and faithful endeavors".[6] The irreconcilables in the congregation, however, were not to be won over. The climax came when the rabbi refused to be present at the service on *Tisha B'ab,* the fast commemorative of the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem. Members that had been antagonizing all reforms withdrew and formed the *She'erith Israel* congregation. Lilienthal based his refusal to participate in this service on the ground that the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem by the Romans in the year seventy with the accompanying loss of Jewish nationality should not be observed by a service of lamentation and fasting, for this catastrophe was really providential, inasmuch as it was the beginning of the world mission of the Jews. The loss of a separate Jewish nationality was the necessary preliminary to the universal Jewish mission in

[4] *Israelite,* II, 44.
[5] Ibid, 412.
[6] Ibid, III, 292.

all portions of the earth. Throughout his life Lilienthal remained true to this conception, which is in fact the accepted teaching of reform Judaism. Time and again he reiterated this thought; on many important occasions he stated it; the two greatest events in the life of the congregation during his service were the dedication of the new temple at Mound and Eighth Streets in 1869, and the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of his service as rabbi; in his dedication sermon he used these words: "We owe no longer any allegiance to Jerusalem, save the respect all enlightened nations pay to this cradle of all civilizing religions. We cherish no longer any desire for a return to Palestine, but proudly and gratefully exclaim with the Psalmist, 'Here is my resting place; here shall I reside; for I love this place' ".[7] In the anniversary address he emphasized the fact that the reform congregations had eliminated from the prayer book "all sentences referring to a return to Palestine, to the rebuilding of the temple with its sacrifices, referring to the dark times of persecution and mutual aversion",[8] and in his address at the convention of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations held in Washington in the centennial year of American independence, he declared that "modern Judaism does neither dream nor wish to return to Palestine; here is our home; here our fatherland. Hence we strike from all bequeathed prayer books any line that reminds us of the temple and sacrifices; we know that the best religion is humanity, the best divine service, love thy neighbor as thyself; the motto which we in-

[7] *Israelite,* XVI, 10, 8 (September 3, 1869).
[8] *Israelite,* XXVII, No. 52.

scribe on our banner is the common fatherhood of God and the common brotherhood of man".[9]

The universalism of Judaism formed thus the burden of his preaching and his teaching. To his mind the reform movement emphasized this. Although the first reforms that he introduced into his congregation were accompanied by the upheaval which resulted in the withdrawal of quite a number of members from the congregation, and although his opponents continued to attack him because of his espousal of the reform cause, still he had the great majority of his congregation with him; because of the attacks constantly made upon him his congregation at a meeting held on July 24, 1860, adopted resolutions of confidence in him and expressed their great esteem for him and their appreciation of the work he was doing.[10]

The passing years intensified this feeling of esteem and admiration so that when he resigned the position in February, 1868, to accept a call to the pulpit of Temple Emanuel, New York, such pressure was brought to bear upon him that he withdrew his resignation and consented to remain in Cincinnati. A striking incident in connection with this event indicated the remarkable standing of Dr. Lilienthal in the community at large. Some of the foremost citizens of Cincinnati, headed by Judge Bellamy Storer, requested the Board of Trustees to hold a meeting with them at Judge Storer's home. It was urged at this meeting that Dr. Lilienthal was too valuable a citizen for the community to lose and that every effort should be made to retain him.

One of the reasons why Dr. Lilienthal entertained

[9] Ibid, XXIII, No. 2.
[10] Ibid, VII, 26.

the thought of leaving was the delay in building a new temple, which project lay very near to his heart. Although the land for the structure had been purchased, the work of building was deferred. As an inducement to the rabbi to remain, the promise was made that the work would proceed at once. This was done and the cornerstone of the new temple was laid June 5, 1868. An echo of the dissensions that marked the early days of his work in Cincinnati resounded on this occasion when the Board of Trustees of the *She'erith Israel* congregation, that was composed largely of the seceding orthodox members of the mother congregation, refused to accept the invitation to attend the cornerstone laying; when reproached for this action by Dr. Wise in the columns of the Israelite they answered in a communication telling the reasons why they had seceded; this was because of disagreement with Dr. Lilienthal's views and because, as they claimed, Dr. Lilienthal had changed from orthodox to reform after coming to Cincinnati, he having been elected as an orthodox rabbi. Thus, it appeared that the bitter feelings engendered in these early years had not been assuaged. It was no doubt true, as these men claimed, that they had elected Dr. Lilienthal thinking he was orthodox in his views, but before he came to Cincinnati, he had expressed his sympathy with the reform standpoint. In truth, he was a leading member of a liberal society in New York known as the *Lichtfreunde;* in an address delivered before this organization in 1849 he had said (and these words were published): "We feel that we have broken with the past of Judaism, and that the bridge which would make a retreat possible is cut off". Still he was by no means an extremist as this rhetorical phrase would indicate; for all that he held strongly to

all that was fine in the past and built upon it for the future. As already said he was a conservative reformer. He was by no means fanatical in his reform sentiments, but calm and reasonable. If there was any fanaticism at all in his makeup it appeared in his war upon fanaticism and in his intense love of freedom, as shall appear later on in the discussion of his attitude on such questions as religious liberty, the American doctrine of the separation of church and state, and Bible reading in the public schools. In his preaching as in all his congregational activities, he was animated by the one desire of inculcating the love of Judaism into the hearts of his people, and this he felt could be done best by interpreting the faith in the terms of the age in which he was living.

The new temple was dedicated on August 27, 1869. The hopes of years were realized and the rabbi's heart sang for joy. His sermon on this to him so great occasion was one of the most significant utterances of his life. It contains the ripe fruit of his thinking. In this sermon spoke the man who represented the finest type of the American Jew, the man who by his teaching and his service had given conspicuous testimony always and everywhere that the Jews are a religious community and not a nation. In this sermon spake the man who believed in progress despite all the outward signs that now and then seemed to belie it. In this sermon occurs that famous passage, possibly the best known that Dr. Lilienthal ever penned, in which he drew the distinction between theology and religion. The more striking passages of the sermon were as follows:

"Progress and Judaism—these words once did seem to both Jew and Gentile a flagrant contradiction. Our

Jewish fathers for eighteen long centuries, excluded from the enjoyment of all human rights and immunities, hunted down by church and state with fanatical and bigoted nicknames, as the Pariahs of Society, despaired of the present, looked with gloomy forebodings into the future, and found hope and comfort only in the reminiscences of their glorious past.

"Hence their longing for Jerusalem; hence their desire for the worship of the old temple with its obsolete ceremonies and sacrifices; hence their continuous wailing and lamentations in their prayers; hence their gloomy and austere seclusion from all intercourse with the world, that hated, despised and persecuted them.

"But this dark night, thank Almighty Providence, has passed away, though the ghastly spectre may still be lurking here and there. Since the glorious day of the Fourth of July, 1776, the spell has been broken, and a better morning is dawning for the human race. Since the blessed and immortal fathers of our country, these prophets of modern times, declared it to be "a self-evident truth that every man is entitled to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness", the old fetters and barriers have been broken down, and all over the old continent, political and religious liberty begins now to become the law of the various countries. God bless America for this glorious redemption . . . Sunning ourselves in the golden rays of human and universal liberty we have ceased our wailings and cries of sorrow, and our prayers and psalmodies are full of thanksgiving and wishes for the welfare of the whole human race. Where in old books, relics reminding us of the dark bygone times are to be found, we unreservedly strike them out and declare them to be

abolished. Nothing but love, sympathy and good will to all mankind of whatsoever race or denomination.

"This idea of reform and progress is with the Israelite no longer a question of principle; but in order to be fully carried out, only a question of time. Old habits and notions can not be uprooted over night; they do not die a sudden, apoplectic death; but they gradually must give way and are passing away . . .

"The curse under which humanity has suffered so long is the fatal fact that men mistook theology for religion, and confounded them. And yet are they not as unlike and dissimilar as day and night, light and darkness? Theology is dogmatism; religion is love, broad and universal as God's love. Theology sowing strife, hatred, prejudice and bigotry separates mankind; religion by teaching love, forbearance, toleration and reconciliation tries to unite it. Theology dreams of a superiority and supremacy of the clergy; religion teaches you shall all be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Theology, claiming the superiority of the church over the state and human society attempts to make the highest interests of the human race subservient to obsolete medieval dogmas and imaginary claims; religion, rejoicing in the sacred principles of civil and religious liberty and equality, leaves the mode of worshiping our Heavenly Father to the private conviction and responsibility of the individual. Of theology it may be said, with the prophet's words: 'They cry for peace, peace, but there is no peace', while religion glories in the sublime words: 'Peace be to those who are near and afar off', says the Lord, 'I shall heal them all'.

"This is the radical difference between theology and religion. And hence the immortal fathers of this,

our glorious country, when laying down the fundamental principles of our free institutions, at once decreed the final and thorough separation of church and state. Blessed be their sacred memory! It must have been almost a divine revelation that inspired men like Jefferson, Adams, Franklin and their matchless compeers, who, when trying to establish a union of hands and hearts between man and man, pronounced this all important principle, upon which the peace of the modern state and society is going to rest.

"Efforts both in the old and the new world are now being made to revive the old struggle, to establish the supremacy of the church, to secure its superiority over the sacred rights and liberties with which the Creator has endowed his children. Thank Heaven, the progressive men of all nations are to thwart and frustrate this nefarious scheme."[11]

The succeeding years passed pleasantly and quietly as far as his work in the congregation was concerned; other reforms such as the substitution of the *Minhag America,* the reform prayer book, for the old *Siddur,* the traditional liturgy, and the removal of the hat during divine worship were introduced. Dr. Lilienthal preached effectively as ever. The congregation grew steadily and maintained its place as one of the great Jewish congregations of the land. The public service of its renowned leader both in the cause of Judaism and the larger work in the local community and the country reflected glory upon it. The expression of appreciation of his labors by his congregation and the community was voiced finely on the great occasion of the celebration of the twenty-fifth anni-

[11] *Israelite,* XVI, 10, 8.

versary of his service. The whole community joined in the tribute of devotion and love. His life-long friend and coworker, Dr. Isaac M. Wise, pictured the fine service that Dr. Lilienthal had rendered to Jew and Judaism and incidentally to humanity by assuaging prejudice. Possibly there has never been a Jewish leader in this country who has done more effective work in this regard than did the messenger of peace who stood so many years in the pulpit of the Bene Israel congregation. Dr. Wise summed up this service in a beautiful tribute to his friend when he said:

"There are, I have no doubt, many persons within hearing distance who recollect the various prejudices which existed also in this enlightened city, between Jew and Gentile. It is not the will of God, who is the common Father of all; it is not the teaching of Judaism, with its great law of 'Love thy neighbor as thyself', that such prejudices and dissensions and mutual distrust should exist among good people; and by the will of God, and let me add, by the beneficent influence of Rev. Dr. Lilienthal, most of these prejudices were eradicated in this city. 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that publisheth peace'. He approached priest and layman, Christian and infidel, church and society with the palm branch of peace, soothed and calmed agitated minds, carried light into obscure recesses and good will into many hearts. Therefore, to a great extent we enjoy here this peace and mutual respect, this good understanding between Jew and Gentile, which is our pride and satisfaction, and for which we are largely indebted to the man of whom we say 'Thou art peace', therefore, 'thy house is in peace'.

"The billows of dissensions did run high, alas!

very high and threatening about the camp of Israel. The great and glorious work which had been accomplished by thousands of hearts and thousands of hands to the glory of God and the honor of Israel on this virgin soil of freedom and progressive humanity was seriously threatened with cessation and retrogression by the dissensions of influential and potent men. We are the sons of different countries and the disciples of different schools; we had too many different educators; our dear mother, the religion of Israel, and the freedom of our country, could not at once overcome all the difficulties, dissensions and inherited notions which did necessarily cling to us. The man who, like Aaron of old, stepped in with the censer of frankincense between the living and the dead, was again this very same Dr. Lilienthal. Once, twice, ten times, again and again, he made earnest attempts to unite the discordant elements, to bring peace into the camp of Israel, and he did succeed; every good work succeeds. He did succeed in establishing the Rabbinical Literary Association which means more, vastly more, than a union of talents, or the mere cooperation of literary gentlemen. It means a good understanding among the leading teachers of American Israel; it means 'peace be to all that thou hast'. God bless the harbinger of peace".

The president of the congregation, Mr. Julius Freiberg, was its spokesman, and in presenting to the distinguished celebrant a laurel wreath in the name of the congregation, said:

"This laurel wreath is an emblem of victory in the great and glorious struggle of religious liberty against bigotry and fanaticism;

"Light against darkness and superstition;

"Free inquiry against intolerance;

"Humanity and brotherly love against sectarianism and hatred;

"Charity and benevolence against heartlessness and discrimination; and as trophies of war you carry with you the hearts of all the members and a host of friends;

"And as the fruit of the plant which this wreath represents turns a golden hue as it ripens, so may you live in health, joy, vigor, and usefulness with and among us until your golden year of jubilee."

In his response to these tributes of appreciation and affection, Dr. Lilienthal stressed what he considered the outstanding features of his long service. There is no note of vainglory in the words, only a heartfelt statement of the use of unusual opportunities for the teaching of high truths in his own pulpit, and the furtherance of peace and good will among men in many places. Let some portions of this deeply felt address be set down here:

"While we sing hymns of thanksgiving for the blessings we have enjoyed together, we have higher, broader and more ample reasons for looking back with satisfaction on the work which we have accomplished during the past twenty-five years.

"It was our common aim to secure for our religion the respect it deserves; to claim for it the right and privileges to which it is entitled and to prepare a better brotherly understanding between the various churches and denominations in our land.

"When I, the Jewish rabbi, with your consent, delivered sermons in the Unitarian and Universalist churches in this city, the papers both in the old and

the new continent dilated upon this new phenomenon, and inscribed their leaders Signs of the Times.

"Yes, signs of the times they were, but not in the sense they put it. We did not mean to surrender the essence and spirit of our religion, but we intended to point out that truth which is at the foundation of every religion, and where we can all meet on one common platform, as the children of one God, as brethren of one and the same human family.

"We said this common platform is love to God and love to man. Open the Bibles of the various nations and religions; they all teach and preach the same doctrine; it is the true revelation of the divine spirit enthroned in the human heart and mind. Let this doctrine of universal unsectarian love once be acknowledged, then the Kingdom of God will be near at hand; fanaticism, bigotry and prejudice will die out, and under the most various forms and ceremonies we will worship but one Father. We will hold divine services becoming our age, as love will be the officiating high priest, love the only sacrifice demanded by divine justice and mercy.

"Then we said we shall no longer speak of mere material toleration, where sectarian ill-will and ambitions are checked merely by the power of the modern state; nay, with true, genuine American spirit we shall speak of the full religious liberty and equality which honors and protects all forms in which God is invoked and love is taught, inculcated and practiced. . . .

"On this solemn occasion, I can not forbear uttering the joyful and blissful sentiment that we have not worked in vain, and that Cincinnati took the lead in fostering a brotherly sentiment between Jews and Christians. It is a bright gem in the diadem of our

Queen City. On many, many a public occasion she has constantly shown that she honors the man and the citizen and disregards all denominational differences. . . .

"And if asked, What have you and your congregation done to promote, as Israelites, the noble aim you have pictured before our eyes? we are able to give an account satisfactory to ourselves and our friends.

"We have erected this temple, of which every visitor, awakening from a dream of bygone ages, exclaims with the Patriarch 'This is none other but a house of God and a gate to heaven'. . . .

"In union with our progressive sister congregations and their eminent leaders we have established a divine service working for Israel's redemption in this land of virgin liberty; a service in harmony with the spirit of the age and the progress of humanity; a service teaching and promulgating nothing but love, justice and liberty.

"Therefore, I was ordered to preach from this pulpit the American doctrine of separating church and state, to uphold our star-spangled banner with the glorious inscription of civil and religious liberty, and forever maintain the interests of our free public schools, the nursery of free and good men. And how easily, how cheerfully could I obey orders, when I had to apply but the principles and essential doctrines of our Jewish religion.

" 'One God' and because he is One—He is the father of all his human children, no matter what their race or creed may be. As the prophet says, 'Have we not all one father, has not one God created us all; why should we destroy the covenant of brotherly love?'

"How easily and cheerfully could I obey orders to preach universal love and good will, when we Israelites do not know of damnation on account of creed and happily assert that the Eternal Judge looks only to the moral works of man!

"How easily and cheerfully could I obey orders to preach and teach justice and liberty, when I remember that even on the bell in Independence Hall which pealed forth the sounds of human deliverance are engraved but the words of scripture 'You shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants'! . . ."

Thus had he labored and achieved as rabbi of the congregation; but this represented only a fraction of his activity; what it was granted to him to accomplish in his service outside of the congregation must form the subject of another chapter.

CHAPTER V.

IN PUBLIC LIFE.

It has already appeared in the course of this narrative, that almost from the beginning of his settlement in the United States, Lilienthal addressed himself to public activities in the interest primarily of the Jews and Judaism; later in his career he became identified prominently with work for the public weal without distinction of creed. The various phases of this public activity may now be passed in review.

Shortly after his arrival in Cincinnati a call was issued for a conference of rabbis at Cleveland. This call was signed by a great majority of the rabbis then in the country. The conference, which was held in the month of October, 1855, instead of becoming, as was hoped, the bond of union for all the rabbis, resulted in most unfortunate dissensions, the effect of which lasted for a quarter of a century. The statement of principles adopted by the rabbis at Cleveland called forth bitter protests from the Emanuel congregation of New York and the Har Sinai congregation of Baltimore. Dr. David Einhorn, the rabbi of the latter congregation, who had arrived in this country a short time previously, was the moving spirit in this opposition. The protests were published in his magazine *Sinai* and he himself arraigned sharply the resolutions adopted at the conference. Opposition was expressed, however, not only by Einhorn, the radical reformer, but also by Isaac Leeser, the foremost orthodox rabbi

of the country. Leeser, who had at first expressed himself favorably concerning the plan of a conference of all the rabbis of the country, found it impossible, after the conference had taken place, to endorse what was done there because of the reforming tendency of the men at Cleveland. The results of the conference were, therefore, most unfortunate. Lilienthal, who had been secretary of the conference, took up the gauntlet thrown down by Einhorn on the one hand and Leeser on the other, and defended the work of the Cleveland conference in the columns of the *Israelite,* of which he was the associate editor at the time. In an article on "The Parties", he characterized the division among the rabbis as uncompromising orthodoxy, represented by the *Occident;* uncompromising reform represented by *Sinai* and practical possible reform represented by the *Israelite* and the Cleveland Conference.[1] He addressed also a series of public letters to the Reverend Isaac Leeser, the first three of which were entitled "The Spirit of the Age";[2] the fourth "Union and Usages",[3] and the fifth "Rabbinical Codices or the *Shulchan Aruch*".[4] Mr. Leeser answered these articles in his organ, the *Occident,* in two articles, "Let us Consult Others"[5] and "Rev. Dr. Lilienthal on Reform".[6] Lilienthal defended the conference also in a series of other articles.[7] He deplored the animosities called forth by the conference notably

[1] *Israelite,* III, 12, 12.
[2] Ibid, 22, 170; 23, 180; 24, 189.
[3] Ibid, 25, 197.
[4] Ibid, 26, 204.
[5] *Occident,* XIV, 475.
[6] Ibid, 534.
[7] *Israelite,* II, 137, 148, 164.

as these bitter feelings of reformers against reformers made impossible the calling of a second conference.[8] In an article entitled "Let us Alone", he wrote in discouraged strain concerning these differences, each party following its own way and wishing neither cooperation nor union. Still he is not altogether dismayed, for he closes with the words "Let us not despair. The golden rays of eternal truth soon will drive away the intangible shadows of the uneasy twilight and out of the present dissension will be born a higher state of peace and union!"

This hope was not to be realized for many years. Fourteen years elapsed ere the reformers of the eastern section of the country and the reformers of the west met together. This joint meeting took place at Philadelphia in November, 1869, when Einhorn, Samuel Hirsch, Samuel Adler and other rabbinical leaders of the east met together with Lilienthal and Wise and other western rabbis. This conference adopted a declaration of principles in which all present agreed. Peace seemed to have settled where there had been discord. But it was not a lasting peace as appeared shortly thereafter.

The Philadelphia conference not having taken up the subject of a *Minhag America,* a prayer book for American reform congregations, in which Wise and Lilienthal and others were much interested, the Cincinnati rabbis called another conference which met at Cleveland, July 12-15, 1870. In order to avoid conflict with the Philadelphia conference and not to arouse any ill-feeling or misunderstanding, the purpose of this conference was stated to be the prayer

[8] Where Are We Now? Ibid, III, 244.

book question which had not been touched at Philadelphia and could therefore be fairly considered open for discussion and action. None of the noted eastern leaders attended this conference. The prayer book question was fully discussed. It was agreed that all prayers referring to the return to Palestine, the sacrifices, the personal Messiah, the bodily resurrection and the angels be omitted. The work of revising the prayer book was entrusted to a number of committees that were to report at another meeting.

It was at this conference that Dr. Lilienthal proposed a series of resolutions which were adopted unanimously. These resolutions read:

"At a meeting of the rabbis of various cities in the union, held in the city of Cleveland, Ohio, from and after July 13, in consideration of the religious commotion now agitating the public mind in both hemispheres, in accordance with the principles of Judaism, it was unanimously declared:

"1. Because with unshaken faith and firmness we believe in one invisible and eternal God, we also believe in the common Fatherhood of God and the common brotherhood of man.

"2. We glory in the sublime doctrine of our religion which teaches that the righteous of all nations will enjoy eternal life and everlasting happiness.

"3. The divine command, the most sublime command of the Bible 'Thou shalt love thy fellowmen as thyself' extends to the entire human family, without distinction of either race or creed.

"4. Civil and religious liberty, and hence, the separation of church and state, are the inalienable rights of men, and we consider them to be the brightest gems in the Constitution of the United States.

"5. We love and revere this country as our home and fatherland for us and our children; and therefore consider it our paramount duty to sustain and support the government; to favor by all means the system of free education, leaving religious instruction to the care of the different denominations.

"6. We expect the universal elevation and fraternization of the human family to be achieved by the natural means of science, morality, justice, freedom and truth."

The conference adjourned to meet in New York. This meeting took place October 24 of the same year, 1870. Dr. Lilienthal was elected president of this conference. It was resolved at the first session to invite the New York rabbis among whom were David Einhorn and Samuel Adler, to attend. The attempt at reconciliation failed much to the sorrow of the president of the conference, all of whose hopes centered upon peace among the rabbis of the country.

The next rabbinical conference was held in Cincinnati, June 5-9, 1871. Lilienthal submitted his report as retiring president. It was at this conference that the plan of forming a Union of American Hebrew Congregations, so long the hope of Isaac M. Wise, was definitely endorsed, as well as the project of opening rabbinical seminaries not only in Cincinnati, but also in New York. In the presidential report just mentioned Lilienthal referred to this subject in the following words:

"Permit me to call your attention to the necessity of drafting a course of study to be pursued at these future colleges. It is a subject of the highest importance and will and must call forth lively and earnest discussions. It will bring to light the differences

between the instruction of the rabbis of bygone times and the instruction needed for the members of the present and future reform congregations. It will make apparent the difference as yet prevailing between the Reform Movement in Europe and in America. It will show clearly how much, under the free development and autonomy of our congregations, we are ahead of those in Europe, and while they across the ocean, in conformity with the whole spirit of European institutions, cling to the historical school and development, we on this side of the ocean, in accordance with the spirit of American institutions, belong to the rational school. We are used to a greater latitude of freedom than they in Europe, who in all their movements, like minors, are superintended by their governments.

"I therefore recommend to you the appointment at the earliest convenience of a committee that will take this important subject under consideration, both of the establishment of rabbinical seminaries and the course of studies to be pursued therein."

He also urged that the rabbis support the new Hebrew Publication Society which had just issued a circular;[9] he recommended the formation of circuits of small communities that had no rabbi so that these communities could be visited from time to time by rabbis in the vicinity who should speak to the elders and teach the children. This was the first suggestion

[9] This second attempt to form a Jewish Publication Society in New York failed of success; the society existed only a few years; the present Jewish Publication Society of America, organized in 1888, represents, therefore, the third attempt to organize a publication society among Jews in this country.

on the subject of circuit preaching that had ever been made at a Jewish convention in this country.

Lilienthal served as vice president of this conference. A suggestion having been submitted to the conference that a national rabbinical office be established at Washington, Lilienthal, who was always strongly opposed to anything that had even the semblance of a central hierarchical authority, offered the following preamble and resolution which were adopted unanimously as the sense of the conference:

"Whereas, it was mooted in some quarters to establish a National Rabbinical office in Washington, the capital of our country, and the seat of our national legislature; and

"Whereas, we are opposed to any centralization of hierarchical authority, valuing as the best means of advancing progress and reform, the autonomy of the congregations; and

"Whereas, the Hebrew congregation at Washington is as yet not numerous enough to employ a rabbi; therefore be it

"Resolved, that the rabbis meeting at this conference offer their services gratuitously to the Hebrew congregation at Washington to preach and to lecture there whenever called upon.

"Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions signed by the officers of this conference be forwarded to Simon Wolf, Esq., at Washington, in order to communicate them to the Hebrew congregation of that city."

The so-called "personal God" incident at this Cincinnati conference stirred the troubled rabbinical waters to renewed fury, and the differences between the east and the west became more accentuated than ever.

Lilienthal, who was bitterly disappointed at the continuation of the feud, saw the uselessness of making further attempts at reconciliation.[10]

No further conference was held at this period. The Cincinnati rabbis despairing of enlisting the East in their projects of union, confined themselves now to the West and South. The Union of American Hebrew Congregations composed in the first instance of western and southern congregations was organized in March, 1873, through the persistent efforts of Isaac M. Wise, ably seconded by Max Lilienthal.

This great feat having been accomplished, the second great plan of establishing a rabbinical seminary was now proceeded with. A thanksgiving service was held at the Plum Street Temple, Cincinnati, on May 22, 1874, because the first funds had been subscribed that made possible the opening of such a seminary in the near future. At this meeting Dr. Lilienthal said:

"We want a theological seminary fully coming up to the requirements of our progressive age. The trodden paths of antiquated theology will not do any longer. The natural sciences, justified criticism and restless skepticism have undermined many of its foundations. We dare no longer acknowledge an open contradiction between science and religion. What is true in the one must be true in the other, no matter how the dead letter of a book or the cause of a church may oppose it. . . . Free investigation and free inquiry, sanctioned by reason, though discredited by systems of blind faith, must rule supreme. And though we may have to surrender many an idea and

[10] See his communication to the *Jewish Times* of New York entitled "One word more and then done" of the date July 5, 1871.

sentiment heretofore endeared to us, truth and pure religion will only gain by this process and secure a future for them which all good, wise and true men were always hoping and praying for.

"Theology must be adapted to the progress of science; it must be entirely regenerated. New sciences have been started since the last three decades which entirely change its former aim and aspect. Not only the study of the natural sciences with their gigantic progress influence the explanation of the old sacred books, but comparative philology, comparative mythology, the translation of the holy books of other nations and religions; the excavations carried on both in the old and new world, all assist in creating a cosmos in the science of religion too. Old prejudices give way; old errors are corrected; old systems crumble to pieces, and upon the solid basis of pure religion the temple is reared in which mankind will learn to understand each other and to light the holy flame of love instead of the lurid fire of bigoted fanaticism; and to promote that peace and mutual good will which is and shall be the essence of all true religion.

"In such a broad and liberal spirit, with such enfranchising views, the new theological Hebrew Seminary in America shall be organized. In this spirit the teachers and professors shall rear and instruct the students; and with such enlightenment these shall then go forward and preach the word of love, universal charity and liberty which shall be, as it always has been, the pride of our creed, our religion and our race."

And when finally the hopes of many years were fulfilled in the establishment of the Hebrew Union College, Dr. Lilienthal, sharing heart and soul in the joy

of his friend, Dr. Wise, the founder of the institution, said at the jubilee service held in celebration of the great event:

"I have been instructed by the Board of Governors to speak on the Hebrew American College to be established and supported by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

"There are two adages, both as old as true, namely: 'In union there is strength', and 'Knowledge is power'. While the first one has already been elucidated by the preceding speaker, I have to allude but to the second one.

"While others may assert that ignorance gives power, not to the ignorant ones themselves, but to those who know how to use and to handle them, it has always been in our religion one of the cardinal rules and principles to disseminate knowledge and to encourage free inquiry. 'To know understandingly the Lord thy God' is the command of the Bible. *'Chochmah'* (wisdom) is the word used in the Hebrew language both for science and religion, and hence Ibn-Ezra, one of the earliest and soundest critics of the cerebrated Hebrew-Spanish school, has already laid down the principle, 'The mediator between God and man is reason'.

"Blind faith was ever abhorred in our midst. The experience we have gathered during many centuries has taught us the truth of the assertion that blind faith makes the people too confident in politics, too credulous in science, and too intolerant in religion. Being staunch friends of independence, toleration and mutual good will, our motto has ever been the words, pronounced by rhetoricians to be the most sublime sentence in the human language, 'Let there be light'.

And from all our synagogs and pulpits, both old and new, has ever resounded the glorious echo: Light, more light.

"Hence our rabbis in the times of the Talmud laid down the rule that before building a synagog or temple, the congregation is bound to erect a school. Hence, during all the dark times of the middle ages, Jewish high schools and universities flourished all over the Old Continent. Spain, France, Germany and Poland were studded with such seats of learning; and the answer to the oft-raised question, how could the Jews, scattered and dispersed, withstand the persecuting power of state and church? is found in the fact that they have always provided for the education, instruction and development of the mind; they know too well that the mind governs the body, and that knowledge will, in the end, always triumph over ignorance, superstition and fanaticism.

"True to the legacy of our past history we, the American Jews, are now on the eve of opening such a school of learning for our rising generation. In the struggle for existence, as Darwin calls it, we could not have done it sooner. The poor emigrant arriving at these blessed shores of human liberty first had to secure his independence, first had to become acquainted with the ever glorious institutions of his adopted country, before he could attempt such a work. But these obstacles having been overcome, we Israelites look back to our history and our experience, and now consider it a supreme duty to afford to our men and especially to our future preachers and teachers, the opportunity of acquiring that knowledge which shall fit them to become true and faithful exponents of our religion.

"Of course, we could have adopted the plan proposed by several good men, of sending those who wish to devote themselves to the Jewish ministry to Germany, where the master minds of Jewish theology and literature are diffusing their stores of learning to crowds of Jewish students, and where Jewish colleges are already fully established, thoroughly organized, and richly endowed. But we do not want any ministers reared and educated under the influence of European institutions; we intend to have ministers reared by our glorious American institutions, men who love their country above all, men who will be staunch advocates of such civil and religious liberty as the men who signed the Declaration of Independence understood it, men who are ready to defend this priceless gem against all and any encroachments, and hence we wish to keep our students at home and raise them as genuine Americans on the virgin soil of American liberty.

"But while opening this evening our young institution, we do not pretend in the least to compare it with the new Jewish colleges in Europe. There men quite well versed in the Talmudical and rabbinical literature go to get their finishing polish and education. We, in this country, have to begin at the very foot of the ladder. The boys who have come to prepare themselves for the Jewish ministry have to be prepared almost from the very foundation, and hence we do not as yet open the college proper, but only the preparatory school and the preparatory classes.

"Yes, so far all is merely preparatory. For to establish a Jewish college such as is needed for our time, our wants, and the spirit of our progressive age is a task that needs much preparation even on the part of

our best scholars and theologians. The course of study formerly pursued in the *Yeshiboth* or Talmud schools has become obsolete; hundreds of big volumes, which formerly constituted the indispensable library of a rabbi, have today interest but for the antiquarian and historian. Life, real and earnest, requires quite different studies; and it is no easy task, indeed, to build up a new theology, to separate the chaff from the wheat, and to prepare a course of study suited to our age and to its changed wants.

"New sciences claim our full attention. Comparative theology, comparative mythology, comparative philology are young but mighty sciences, and are efficiently assisted by an impartial criticism. They have to be taught by competent teachers and have to be mastered by the modern rabbi. They will, of course, batter a breach in many an institution and in many an opinion heretofore held dear and sacred. But we do not fear; they will injure and hurt theology, but not religion; they will assist in advancing Theism and Humanity, which are the enlivening and everlasting principles of Judaism, and hence we must try all means to sketch and perfect a plan which will carry out this noble object and give us ministers fully up to the wants of our progressive time and enlightened humanity.

"In order to attain this difficult but noble aim you all know that the Convention of the United Hebrew Congregations, held this year at Buffalo, on my motion, appointed a committee to confer on this subject with the eminent Hebrew scholars both in Europe and America, to obtain from them their advice and the result of their experience.

"The committee is earnestly at work, and before the

college proper will be opened, a course of study will have been prepared that will be an honor to American Judaism, an honor to the United Congregations, and a sound, lasting foundation to the future college. It shall be the test of what modern Judaism wants and what it promises to perform and to accomplish. This time of preparation shall not be lost in the development of modern Jewish science and literature.

"With such aspirations we open the preparatory classes of our college; but let us not forget to mention here and at once that the students both in the preparatory classes and in the future college, while receiving therein their religious and theological training, are by our laws obliged to visit our public high schools and the newly organized McMicken University of Cincinnati.

"We Israelites are the staunch and unequivocal friends of our system of free and public schools. Our children throng our primary, intermediate, and high schools. We value and appreciate the advice given by our great Thomas Jefferson, that vigilance is the price of liberty, and education the cornerstone and safeguard thereof. And following out this principle our students of Jewish theology must visit our free and public institutions. The intercourse with young America will free them of all sectarian prejudice and arrogance, and nothing shall be omitted in our rules of discipline, by which we can make them good Jews, but no less true, loyal and devoted Americans. . . .

"In order to encourage young and talented men to study as rabbis, and to offer them the prospect of a secured livelihood, two measures have to be adopted. First, the annual elections of preachers have to be abolished, and abolished in good earnest. What good

man having devoted his youth and his talents to this profession, will expose himself and his future to the whims of public opinion and individual favor? I, at least, for my part, would not risk the future of my children to such a precarious position, and I am sure every thoughtful father will coincide with me in this regard. The elections must be during good behavior; this point gives full guarantee to the congregations that no unworthy man shall hold their office and draw the salary; and to the minister it gives that independence which is indispensably required for the conscientious administration of the holy and responsible office.

"And the other measure I advocate is, stop starting new congregations where a congregation is already established, unless the increasing number of worshipers requires it. Our congregations, with a few exceptions, are yet young, and most of them unable to pay a salary adequate to the demands and cost of living. This evil can only be remedied if the number of contributing members will increase, so that not in every nook and corner of every little town a new congregation will spring into existence.

"I myself know quite well that twenty-five or thirty years ago, when the tide of Jewish immigration began to set in on the shores of the Atlantic, the organization of German, Polish, English and Portuguese congregations was a natural consequence of the various nationalities, with their different customs, habits and opinions, which had landed in America. They then could not understand each other; they could not agree together.

"But this time has happily passed away. Our sons, born in America, are proud of the title of Americans,

and do not trouble themselves whether their parents hail from Germany or France, or any other part of Europe. They wish to be Americans, and nothing but Americans, and as such they will cling and work together. For them, for their future, and not for our foreign, antiquated notions, we are bound to work. Let the dead past bury its dead, and let us foster that harmony, that mutual good will, that forbearance and indulgence which will strengthen our congregations and enable them, without difficulty, to accomplish all the noble objects we must have in view. 'In union is strength', holds good not only for the seventy-two congregations who have entered into the new covenant of brotherhood and mutual assistance, but for the Israelites of every town and city. Mind the old motto—'United we stand, divided we fall'!

"I would close my remarks if I had not to allude to a rumor contained in the *Deborah* of last week. It says that another Jewish seminary will be opened in New York. We hail the rumor with joy and sincere hopefulness. Our brethren in New York have the means, the right men in the right place, the grand public institutions at their command. Why should they not emulate the noble example set by their brethren in the west? There is plenty of room in our country for two such colleges, and before ten years will have elapsed both of them will be crowded. There will be neither jealousy nor rivalry. Both of us will work for one and the same common good. There will be competition, perhaps; but competition is not only the life of trade, but the life of every enterprise, and will result but to the good of the community at large. . . ."

In the meantime Lilienthal had established the first

juvenile journal for Jewish children in this country. He was always deeply interested in the education of children and he had felt for years the necessity of a paper for children that would supplement the teaching in the religious school. He established such a paper single-handedly, which he named the Sabbath School Visitor. The first number of this journal appeared January 22, 1874. Dr. Lilienthal edited the paper for eight years until the day of his death. He wrote charmingly for children and the paper was welcomed throughout the land by Jewish children everywhere.

When the Hebrew Union College was opened he served not only as a member of the governing board of the institution, where his wise counsel proved of invaluable assistance during the formative pioneer years in shaping its policy, but he was also a member of the faculty, teaching history and homiletics. His name is connected for all time with the history of the college and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

None rejoiced more than he when the differences between the eastern and western sections of reform Judaism were finally healed at the Convention of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations held in New York in 1879, the beginning of the reconciliation having been laid at the Milwaukee meeting in 1878. Then it was that the great reconciler among the American rabbis again conceived the plan of a rabbinical association, which would combine in its membership all the rabbis of the country. He agitated the matter in May, 1878, when he called upon his brethren to join together in an organization whose objects were to be the publication of a Jewish quarterly and a union of the Jewish ministers of the country. A preliminary

meeting was held in Milwaukee in July of that year during the convention of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and the society was definitely organized at New York on July 9, 1879, under the name and title of The Rabbinical Literary Association. Dr. Lilienthal, its founder, was elected president. Its objects were defined to be:

"1. The association shall meet periodically for the purpose of discussing current religious topics of Jewish theology and the reading of essays on such subjects as may be selected and approved at each previous meeting of the Literary Committee.

"2. To publish a periodical devoted to the object of the Association.

"3. Recommendation to the Jewish public of such books for schools and popular use as the Literary Committee may approve."

In writing a month later[11] about the prospects of the organization, its founder said:

"The prospects for the young, but now permanently organized association are highly favorable, and with God's blessing, will accomplish a great deal of good.

"As said in the preamble of the constitution, it will create good social feelings among the rabbis and ministers of the country. Instead of previous acrimonies and contentions, a spirit of brotherly love and duty will unite them for a hearty cooperation in the sacred cause of Jews and Judaism.

"And such an association was greatly needed for higher and more important purposes. By the constitution of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations the council is prevented from entering into

[11] *Israelite*, XXVI, 5, 4.

theological discussions. The constitution wisely intended to preserve the autonomy of the congregations.

"But these questions have to be discussed somewhere, if the future of our religion shall be a hopeful, a brilliant one. Theory and practice, life and law again have to be brought into harmony, criticism and science threaten to make inroads into religion; this difficulty has to be removed, too. Our religion—a religion of light and truth—has nothing to fear, and first of all, shall be enabled to face the various antagonistic elements, to silence atheism and pessimism and to do justice both to the religious element and the progressive spirit of the age.

"This association will try to perform this noble and dutiful task. There will be differences of opinion, as they have prevailed since the Talmudical times of Hillel and Shammai and their successors. But the Talmud already has said מתוך הויכוח יחברו האמת Opinions will be exchanged, the burning problems will be discussed calmly and the desired result will be attained. And as nobody is bound, either minister or congregation, to act according to these decisions, and here, too, the autonomy of the congregation will be respected, a scientific basis will be won, upon which in course of time the temple of modern Judaism and modern Jewish theology can and will be safely reared. May God, the guardian of Israel, grant the young institution His divine blessing, and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Rabbinical Literary Association, working hand in hand, will bring an era redounding to the honor of Jews and Judaism."

In his sermon on the Day of Atonement of that year he referred to this organization in the following touching manner:

"I hope it (the Rabbinical Literary Association) shall be the crowning point of the years I have spent in my holy and responsible office. The rabbis and ministers of our whole country have agreed to meet once every year to discuss earnestly the religious questions and to give their opinions and decisions. It is not the work of a day or a year; it needs earnest and conscientious study, ample investigation, serious and fraternal discussions; and with the assistance of God and the hearty cooperation of our coreligionists we hope in the course of time to accomplish a noble and holy work."

He did, indeed, devote much time and attention to the association which met annually during the remaining short period of his life. He edited the quarterly journal issued by the association under the name *The Hebrew Review*. He published a number of articles in this review, namely, the two presidential addresses and the articles "The Jew a Riddle" and "The Blood Covenant".

The *Review* suspended publication after his death. Only two volumes appeared. In speaking of his literary work, mention must be made also of several earlier publications, viz.: his translation of Hecht's *Biblical History*[12] and his volume of poems, *"Freiheit, Frühling und Liebe"*[13]—a collection of beautiful lyrics elevated in feeling, noble in thought and choice in expression.

Zealous and active as Dr. Lilienthal was in the work

[12] *Synopsis of the History of the Israelites from the Time of Alexander the Macedonian to the Present Age, translated from the German of E. Hecht—Enlarged and Improved by Rev. Dr. Lilienthal* (Cincinnati, 1858).

[13] Cincinnati, 1857.

of rabbinical conferences, he was none the less so in serving his coreligionists throughout the country whenever called upon to aid in celebrating extraordinary events, notably the laying of cornerstones and the dedication of new houses of worship. Mention may be made of a number of such. He delivered the address at the cornerstone laying of the temple at Indianapolis, Indiana, on Thanksgiving Day, 1864; of Temple Emanuel, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 16, 1871; of Congregation Shaare Zedek, Detroit, Mich., July 4, 1877. He preached the sermon at the dedication of Tiffereth Israel Congregation, Cleveland, Ohio, August 23, 1861; of the temple at Madison, Indiana, Sept. 4, 1868; of Anshe Chesed Congregation, Vicksburg, Mississippi, May 16, 1870; of the temple at Natchez, Mississippi, March 8, 1872; of Temple Emanuel, Milwaukee, August 30, 1872; of Congregation Bene Israel, Keokuk, Iowa, July 20, 1877. His services were also in extensive demand as lecturer before associations in various parts of the country.

But possibly the most striking service he performed, a service quite unique in his day and generation, although not so at the present time, was his frequent preaching in Christian pulpits. When he occupied the pulpit of the Unitarian Church at Cincinnati in March, 1867, this was recorded as the first time that a rabbi preached from a non-Jewish pulpit in this country. He performed similar functions many times thereafter. By such services he did much towards furthering the spirit of good will in the community and bringing to Christians a better understanding of Jews and Judaism. He was thus a veritable messenger of peace, also here as in other relations of life. If, as is frequently asserted, the Cincinnati community is

marked by a more cordial spirit of fellowship between Jews and non-Jews than is the case in many other communities, this is largely due without any doubt to the work of Dr. Max Lilienthal. He himself has recorded the reasons that induced him to preach from non-Jewish pulpits. In the year 1876, he journeyed westward as far as San Francisco. While en route he wrote letters to the *Israelite,* in which he set down his experiences. In the third of these letters entitled "Our Brethren in the West and in San Francisco", he wrote:

"I could not decline the invitation extended to me by Rev. E. Rexford, the pastor of the Unitarian Church and a friend of mine of many years standing, to preach on the first Sunday evening after my arrival before his congregation.

"As the papers advertised "A Jewish Rabbi in a Christian Pulpit", and this being something new on the Pacific Coast, the building was literally crowded; neither standing nor sitting room could be any more obtained; the elite of the Christians thronged the house.

"I always cheerfully seize the opportunity of stating before a Christian audience the sublime doctrines of our religion. To Christians they are a 'terra incognita'. They read our religious papers as little as we read theirs. But few ever visit our temples and hear there our doctrines expounded. The greatest and most advanced modern scholars, even a Buckle, have no understanding either of the Jewish religion or Jewish history, and the old prejudice is lurking out from every loophole; the masses in general hear Judaism decried so much, either in the pulpit, or in the Sunday School, that a fair and impartial judgment

can scarcely be expected. Hence, I always seize the opportunity whenever offered to preach in churches and to speak on Judaism and its liberal tendencies. It is true that 'we kept our light too long under the bushel', and when in past times we found a proper excuse in the fact that we did not dare to speak without being persecuted, this excuse is no longer valid in our age of free inquiry and religious liberty.

"The immense audience was quite startled when I told them that in our city it is nothing new and surprising to see a Jewish rabbi in a Christian pulpit; that for a fortnight I had filled the pulpit in the Universalist Church by the request and in the absence of its minister, Rev. Spaulding, and that many a time I had been invited to officiate at Christian funerals. These introductory remarks were received with loud applause, and I shall never forget how the blind man who had been led in front of the pulpit and had there taken his seat, stamped with his cane at these surprising remarks."

He touches on this subject also in a letter to the *Jewish Times,* New York, dated January 10, 1870, when writing about the famous Bible-in-the-schools controversy which was agitating the community at that time; in this letter he says:

"The debate, going on here, is directed more to putting our religion in its proper light before the Christian community, to dispelling every prejudice, to ridiculing every sectarian arrogance and promoting a true brotherly feeling of mutual respect and toleration among the various creeds. We all are working nicely in this direction and have no reason to be dissatisfied with our results. The Jewish ministers and the Jewish religion are respected and a hearty cooperation of the

liberal ministers of the various creeds promises a rich harvest of peace and blessing."

It will be recalled that on the occasion of the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Dr. Lilienthal's ministry in the Bene Israel congregation, Dr. Wise, in his address had stated that through the influence of Dr. Lilienthal, most of the anti-Jewish prejudice had been eradicated in Cincinnati. Perhaps this never appeared to finer advantage than in the address he delivered at a concert in aid of a Catholic institution, the Good Samaritan Hospital, in October, 1878. The golden words he spoke there are indicative of the fine spirit of this friend of his kind and made clear the reason why he was held in such high esteem by all classes in the community. "Love and charity", said he, "are the celestial means which unite all of us in one band of noble fraternity; no matter what creed, what religion we profess. On that platform we all proclaim the common Fatherhood of God and the common brotherhood of man. About two subjects we should never speak—religion and politics. We should leave them to the judgment of the individual. For every man is entitled to his opinion and every man is in duty bound to respect, nay, to honor the sincere conviction of his fellow man. But while on these points we differ, love and charity are the most common and precious jewels of the human heart; the loving heart asks neither of what race nor of what creed we are; it loves and helps and assists, like our Heavenly Father, who takes care of all His children."

In view of his attitude as evidenced by his public utterances, it is not surprising that he was honored by his fellow citizens on many occasions and placed in positions of trust and responsibility. He was elected

a member of the Board of Education and held this office for nine years. When, upon removing from the ward, as the representative of which he had served, he resigned his position in 1869, a committee of citizens waited upon him and presented him with a testimonial as a mark of their appreciation of his service. He was elected a member of the Union Board of High Schools in 1861. He was appointed a member of the Board of Directors of the University of Cincinnati in 1872 and served in this capacity till the day of his death in 1882. He was chosen a director of the Relief Union, the pioneer relief-giving organization of Cincinnati in 1861 and held the office also until his death. He was president of the Board of Trustees of the Medical College in 1869 and 1870 and served as president of the National Saengerfest which was held in Cincinnati in 1870. He delivered addresses on many occasions of civic importance and was looked upon by all classes as one of the foremost of the municipality's citizens. The service he rendered in this respect is incalculable. His voice was ever raised in the cause of freedom and right. Upon all possible occasions he spoke lofty words in which he dwelt upon the spirit of American institutions. Unafraid and dauntless, he stood forth as the champion of religious liberty and political equality. Notably did this appear in a controversy on the reading of the Bible in the schools, which became a *cause celebre,* and in his frequent denunciation of attempts to effect a union of church and state. Never did he speak words more eloquent than when he denounced the narrow bigots who would undermine the foundations whereon to his mind the republic rested. But this requires a chapter of its own.

CHAPTER VI.

THE AMERICAN CITIZEN—CHURCH AND STATE—THE BIBLE IN THE SCHOOLS.

Never was there a man more zealous in his love of America and all that this country represents than was Max Lilienthal. This was a passion with him. He abhorred every form and expression of intolerance whether religious or civil; he was an American of the Americans, even though of German birth; time and time again he gave expression to his deep feelings and convictions on the subject of religious liberty. He never minced his words when the occasion arose to denounce movements that aimed at a union of church and state, at Christianizing this country, or the public schools. He was as a watchman on the tower of liberty, calling attention to dangers that threatened this precious stronghold. Intense in his Judaism on the one hand and his Americanism on the other, he embodied the loftiest type of the American Jew. The service that he accomplished in making clear the attitude of the American Jew was great. In his day, as unfortunately is the case still now, there were many who considered the Jew an alien; he made very clear in spoken discourse and written word that in all things except his religion, the Jew was like unto his Christian fellow citizen; that he is actuated by the same love of country, the same enthusiasm for American ideals; that America is his fatherland which he loves as he does his home. Therefore, as has already been

pointed out, he took pains to declare so frequently that Palestine, precious though it be as a memory, is no longer the fatherland of the Jew; had he lived to see the day of the birth of the Zionistic movement whose program is the reestablishment of a Jewish state in Palestine, how he would have opposed and fought this! for his whole life had been devoted to teaching just the contrary; he considered the Palestinian period of Jewish history the preparatory stage for the larger life of Judaism throughout the world; he considered the dispersion an act of Providence and in the modern era of freedom and emancipation, notably as achieved in the United States, he recognized the beginning of the fulfillment of the high hopes of the seers for the coming of the day of the realization among men of the belief in the common Fatherhood of God and the common brotherhood of men. He was a true prophet of humanity, a real worker for peace, good will and fellowship among all men of whatever origin or belief, whatever race or creed. Because America to his mind symbolized this high doctrine he was so jealous of America's honor as the home of true liberty in its every sense, so proud of his American citizenship, and so appreciative of his American opportunities.

It has already been pointed out that the first recorded words that he wrote from this country after his arrival here were a panegyric of the spirit of liberty reigning on these shores; as time passed he became more and more imbued with this spirit; for him Washington, Jefferson, Adams and the other founders of the republic became names to conjure with. In his dedication sermon at Vicksburg, Miss., on May 20, 1870, he said of them:

"The true prophets and apostles of modern civilization were these God-inspired men who, on the fourth of July, 1776, proclaimed the divine principle of civil and religious liberty. They declared church and state separated forever. They proclaimed the self-evident truth that every man is entitled to life, liberty and happiness; they broke the chains of every fettered race and class; and America, the great child America, became the beacon light for the hopes and aspirations of all humanity. O, God bless America. Heaven's best reward to those immortal spirits, Washington and his compeers, who first asserted man's innate rights and titles and Israel's lasting gratitude to them and their descendants for ever more."

His bitter experiences in Russia and Germany, where to obtain advancement the Jew was compelled to apostatize to the reigning religion, a state of affairs which even after the lapse of seventy years still holds largely, caused him to wax eloquent when contrasting the conditions in the United States with these European experiences. Thus, in an address delivered at the first Fourth of July celebration during his New York ministry in the year 1847, he said:

"What wots the state here as to in what manner man would worship his God? Let each one believe and confess what he will; the state as state desires only that each one be a brave and useful citizen.

"Has any one here ever said to you as in Germany, you must first become better, i. e., you must first be baptized before we will consider you men and citizens, before we will give you freedom? No, never; this country and its law rest on the principle that man is born free; permit him the full use of his powers,

grant him the ways and means to support himself and everyone will be good and brave.

"Thus no conditions have been imposed on you here; no reproaches have been cast in your teeth. Here history has begun anew and in this beginning the injustices of Europe are unknown. One God in heaven and on earth and all men His children—yes, all children of His, the all-Merciful, destined for the same rights, the same duties and the same enjoyments; this is the law of this land, the shout of triumph, the paean of victory of this holiday—free, free, stand we here, my brethren; have we then not sufficient cause to rejoice on this day? Let us strive then to become worthy of this day, of the new freedom, the new law. . . ."

Nine years later he took the famous editor, Horace Greeley, sharply to task because of an article that appeared in the New York Tribune filled with gross misrepresentations concerning the Jews. In this letter written on August 15, 1856, Lilienthal, then rabbi in Cincinnati, expressed himself unreservedly but with fine restraint, in these lines:

"Sir, the pretension in your paper that we are strangers wherever we reside is false and untrue. We are true citizens of this great and glorious republic, and have, ever since we inhabitated this soil, proved by actions that we are *true Americans.*

"Sir, we are no strangers wherever we reside. The tombs of our French coreligionists in the Crimea, the orders and decorations lavished upon our brethren by all the monarchs of Europe, the appointing of a Jewish Lord Mayor of London, and many other examples show and prove that we are not mere hawkers, but true and useful citizens of every country in which we

dwell. We are Jews in religious respect, but as citizens we are as true and devoted to our country as any denomination whatever."

And twelve years after this, in his address at the dedication of the temple at Madison, Indiana, he spoke in similar vein; the spirit is the same though the words are different.

"Liberty and equality", he said, "are the fundamental principles of the Mosaic political institutions. One law and one statute shall be unto you, and the stranger who lives with you. No monarchy, no privileged aristocracy, no exempt priesthood; all are equal before the majesty of the law and the jurisdiction of the courts. These are the teachings of Moses, and which country proclaimed these principles in their all-comprising glory but our America? Which set of men in modern times realized their self-evident truth and importance but the immortal signers of the Declaration of Independence? Hence on this virgin soil of America, there was no emancipation of Jews, no bartering with man's innate rights. . . . 'Everyone is entitled to life, liberty and happiness' was their motto and their influence is now felt all over the old continent."

For him there could be no question concerning the loyalty of the Jew to his country; the statement made in his address at the laying of the cornerstone of the Mound Street Temple, Cincinnati, and repeated several years later in a Thanksgiving sermon on November 24, 1870, caused quite a sensation because it put the matter in question in so blunt a fashion. He said:

"Let us then be proud of our country, our flag, our institutions and our name. Let us give sincere thanks that we all, native and adopted citizens, can join in

one grand chorus of praise and exultation. Let us promise today first and above all, we will be and remain Americans in sentiment, word and deed! First Americans and then Jews, Catholics, Protestants or members of whatever denomination any man may choose, according to the dictates of his conscience!"[1]

Without doubt this closing paragraph, "First Americans, and then Jews, Catholics, Protestants", etc., the paragraph which caused the excited comment was inspired by the agitation aroused at that time by various movements in the country; the Vatican Council of 1869 which had set its seal on the doctrine of papal infallibility had brought to the fore the question of the priority of Catholic allegiance, whether to the authority of the Pope or the country? Protestant sectaries were doing all they could to have the Protestant religion recognized as the religion of the government; if not so recognized, to whom then was the Protestant's allegiance due in the first instance, the church or the state? Without doubt it was the discussions of the day that caused the great American rabbi to express himself as unequivocally as he did upon this subject.

In an address on "Rome or America?" delivered on January 28, 1870, at the Plum Street Temple, Cincinnati, and called forth by the syllabus issued by the Roman See in 1869 after the adjournment of the Vatican Council just referred to, Dr. Lilienthal in no uncertain terms, expressed his disapproval of the Catholic doctrine of the dominance of the church in affairs of the state, and contrasted with this teaching the American doctrine of religious liberty when he said:

[1] *Israelite,* XVII, 8 (Dec. 2, 1870).

"The brightest gem in the American diadem is religious liberty. All denominations without any distinction have flourished and finely progressed under this divine coat of arms. The American, the native nature's nobleman, is tolerant and free from all prejudice by the very air he breathes. He assents with all his soul and heart to the sacred axiom that toleration is a great and glorious virtue; but history reminds him, also, that it ceases to be virtue when intolerance raises its serpent head and that self-defense then becomes a virtue, as great and good and imperative as toleration itself."[2]

In connection with this answer to Catholic teaching, mention should be made of his reply to a Protestant clergyman, the Reverend Henry Moore, who, in a discourse delivered in September, 1870, and entitled "The Relation of the Present Affairs in Europe to the Prophetic Scriptures and the Coming of the Son of Man", had brushed aside all Jewish rights to be heard on the subject by saying: "Judaism can scarcely be called a religion". Dr. Lilienthal named the subject of his sermon in refutation of the clergyman's statement's "Is Judaism a Religion?" After arraigning severely Mr. Moore's unwarranted charges the rabbi said:

"Let us declare again that we do not wish to still more embitter the ill feeling that crops out between the various churches by engaging in religious controversies. All we wish and hope and pray for is to live in peace and harmony with all our fellow citizens, no matter how widely they may differ from our religious opinions; to see Judaism as much respected

[2] *Israelite,* XVI, 9 (Feb. 4, 1870).

as any other denomination; and that the equality which is granted it by the state and the law of our blessed country may also be fully recognized by the votaries of the various churches."[3]

This was ever his attitude, that all should have the right to believe as they would and none should be interfered with in the pursuance of that right. In accordance with this conviction, he formulated his definition of the American Jew—" in creed a monotheist, in descent a Hebrew, Israelite or Jew, in all other public or private relations an American citizen".[4] Therefore, at the dedication of the Mound Street Temple, as spokesman for his congregation and all American Jews who believed with him, he stated the political creed of the American Jew thus exaltedly: "We are promising today in a body that forever we shall remain true to the sublime spirit of our constitution as it stands and reads. We shall spare no effort to maintain the free and glorious institutions of our country. In a body we shall resist the encroachment of any denomination on the rights and titles of the modern state and society. . . . Earnestly and sincerely we promise unanimously to support any measure intended to strengthen the institutions bequeathed unto us by the noble spirit of the fathers of this land, which enjoins upon every citizen as a supreme duty to live together as brethren indeed and to foster that spirit of toleration by which every creed being treated by all with unprejudiced and mutual regard, the glory of our land will be enhanced all over the world."

It has become very clear from the statements here quoted that there was no more determined or out-

[3] *Israelite,* XVII, 10 (Sept. 30, 1870).
[4] *Jewish Times,* 5 (Dec. 10, 1869).

spoken opponent of the pernicious doctrine of the union of church and state than Dr. Lilienthal in the entire country. He believed with all the fervor of his soul that this was the root of all political evil. He was constantly on the alert for any sign indicative of the introduction of this evil in the American state. During his lifetime Protestant organizations were constantly active in the attempts to foist this doctrine upon the American people, aye, to have the constitution amended so as to have Christianity recognized as the state religion. Nor have these attempts died out to this day. Vigilance still remains the price of liberty. May all the friends of American religious freedom continue as constantly vigilant as was Max Lilienthal in his day and generation!

The state of North Carolina continued on its statute books the law disqualifying Jews from public office longer than any state in the union; in fact, it was not until 1868 that the law was repealed. Lilienthal, to whose notice this discriminating statute had been called in 1856, asked this pertinent query: "Why do our brethren living in that state not take immediate and prompt steps to have this clause abolished? It is against the constitution of the United States, and therefore illegal. We deem that the attention of the legislature has but to be called to such an illegality and that it will be removed promptly. It is a holy duty imposed upon all our brethren to efface on this soil of religious and civil liberty the last stain of intolerance imported in past times from illiberal Europe."[5]

No incident involving the doctrine of the separation of church and state and religious liberty caused greater

[5] *Israelite*, II, 404.

commotion among the Jews in the sixth decade of the nineteenth century than the celebrated Mortara case. Jews in Europe and America were aghast at this recrudescence of medievalism. The governments of the world were appealed to against this wanton violation of religious freedom by the Papal See. Dr. Lilienthal was aroused to a state of indignation and addressed the following letter to the Jews of the United States:

"The forced abduction of the child of Mr. Mortara in Rome, Italy, by order of the Catholic clergy has created throughout the civilized world a cry of horror and indignation. Religious liberty is set at naught by the fanaticism of the Roman Inquisition. The Israelites throughout Europe have taken energetic measures to have the decision of Rome revoked. The Central Consistory of France, the Board of Jewish Deputies in England, the Consistory of Sardinia have addressed their respective governments on behalf of down-trodden religious liberty. The same was done by the Israelites in Germany. Let us follow their example! Call meetings in all your congregations! Address remonstrances and petitions to our government in Washington that the president and his secretaries may throw their influence, too, in the scale of this important case. We rise not only for our cause, but for one of the highest principles of our enlightened age —'Religious liberty and no clerical inquisition'."

He took active steps in his own community in the matter. He issued a call for a meeting of the Jews of Cincinnati, and pursuant to this call a meeting of committees appointed by all the congregations of the city was held in the vestry of the Broadway synagog, October 30, 1858. A resolution was adopted to the effect that a petition be drawn up which was to be

sent to the Pope, imploring his favorable interference in behalf of the parents. This committee, consisting of Drs. Lilienthal and Wise and Mr. M. J. Mack, reported at an adjourned meeting held a few days later. The meeting resolved to request the secretary of state to forward this petition to the agent of the United States minister at Rome with the request to hand it to the Pope. The petition was signed by the rabbis and the officers of the congregations.

Mention has been made in a previous chapter of the resolutions offered by Dr. Lilienthal at the rabbinical conference at Cleveland in 1870 adopted by that body. The fourth and fifth of these resolutions read:

"Civil and religious liberty and hence the separation of church and state are the inalienable rights of men and we cherish them to be the brightest gems in the constitution of the United States." "We love and revere this country as our home and fatherland for us and our children; and therefore consider it our paramount duty to sustain and support the government; to favor by all means the system of free education, leaving religious instruction to the care of the different denominations."

In a letter to the *Jewish Times* of New York[6] he states the reason that prompted him to offer these resolutions: "Rome, by her syllabus, her encyclical letters, her endless anathemas, and by her new doctrine of Papal Infallibility, has laid before the world her program and the religious system she intends to teach and to enforce. In September the delegates of the various Protestant churches will meet in New York to form an evangelical alliance, and to lay down the

[6] July 20, 1870, p. 342.

program of their doctrines and the system of their church. In the midst of this agitation it is not more than right that we also give a declaration of both our religious and political principles, and to set our religion and ourselves in the proper light before the Christian community, in order to be properly understood and appreciated." And in another letter to the same paper dated February 8, 1871, he states: "I foresaw the struggle between the various sects and denominations years ago. In order to set our religion in the proper light before the American people, I submitted to the conference at Cleveland a set of liberal resolutions which were adopted unanimously and copied by almost all the papers of the country. I feel gratified that the Commissioner of Education at Washington has them inserted in his annual report, lately published (page 364). Excuse this egotistical remark; you know I am not given to indulging in such panegyrics, but I am convinced that by such declarations we can accomplish a great deal more than by wasting time and ink and paper in foul and useless recriminations. It is indeed עת לעשות ליי."[7]

A resolution introduced at a minister's conference held in Cincinnati in November, 1870, to petition Congress to insert the name of God in the constitution and to declare this a Christian nation induced this vigilant champion of American principles to preach a sermon on the subject, "God, Religion and our American Constitution", on December 10. Perhaps the argument against the proposition that this is a Christian country has never been more cogently put than in this sermon, so that the portion especially pertinent to the subject

[7] *Jewish Times* (Feb. 17, 1871).

in hand may well be quoted at length. The preacher began by asking:

"What do the reverend gentlemen mean and intend by inserting the name of God into our constitution? Was the Almighty Ruler of All Nations less God and Father because His holy name was not mentioned in that holy instrument? Was he less worshipped, less revered and adored by the American people, because the fathers of 1776 wisely refrained from meddling with religious matters?

"Yes, what do they mean and intend by trying to declare by a new amendment to the constitution this nation to be a Christian nation? . . .

"What kind of a Christian nation shall this people be, according to the desire of these reverend gentlemen, a Catholic or a Protestant one? Which one? These gentlemen do not come out in their true colors; they of course mean a Protestant Christian nation. They have as yet too much genuine regard for the American spirit of religious liberty that they shall come forward and declare, we mean a Protestant Christian nation. But do not they by this assertion throw down the gauntlet to the Catholic Church, which ever increases in power, and challenge her to a deadly combat? Or do they presume to avert by such a declaration the dangers they fear from the ever-increasing influence of the Catholic clergy? Do they pretend to put a check on the formidable growth of that Church by adding such an amendment to the constitution?

"They will accomplish thereby neither the one nor the other. They will only add fuel to the threatening fire and put the denominational antagonists into a well-defined array; they will thereby only drill and

prepare them for a contest which by such agitations will rather be accelerated than avoided.

"No, my friends, an old, true adage says: 'Let well enough alone'. Our country is in no need of a better name than free America, and our people of no better name than that of an American nation. There is glory enough in the name 'I am an American'. There is security enough against all threatening dangers in our constitution. It will protect and shield us against all temporal or spiritual intrigues and machinations. Let us not wilfully jeopardize its might and power, its wise and well-meant guarantees; let us cling to it at any price as it reads and stands; let us hold firmly to the entire separation of church and state and our beloved country will not only prosper and succeed as heretofore, but will always lead the van of human liberty and civilization.

"Religion, or rather theology, has already brought misery enough to the human race. Let us not repeat again the terrible lessons taught by history. Let us not be ostentatious and vainglorious with our creeds and doctrines, but rather remember the words of the prophet who defines religion with true divine inspiration when he says: 'Man, it has been said unto thee what is good and what the Lord requires of thee; to do justice, to practice charity and to walk in humility before the Lord thy God'. May we be ever mindful of this sublime teaching, and peace and good will shall reign among men to the glory of God and the prosperity of mankind."[8]

These years of 1870 and 1871 were noted for the active agitation on the part of the advocates of the

[8] *Israelite,* XVII, 9 (Dec. 16, 1870).

union of church and state, and it was during these years, as we have already seen, that Dr. Lilienthal fought these agitators all along the line. He seized all opportunities to give expression to his views and to arouse the people. In addition to the words already quoted, others of importance may be given.

In his address at Cincinnati on June 5, 1871, as retiring president of the rabbinical conference, he concluded with these words of admonition:

"Let us not forget that we are living in times in which the religious questions in general will play a most important part. We hear from old Europe that state and church are preparing themselves for a fierce and violent struggle, and the consequences thereof will finally tell even in our country.

"In these threatening times let us show and prove by our discussions and the declaration of our principles that Judaism is in favor of the complete and unbiased separation of church and state and school; that Judaism by all means of reform tries to adapt itself to the progressive spirit of the age; that it will always be found on the side of those who stand up for the unlimited enjoyment of civil and religious liberty; and that it considers and reveres as one of the boons of civilization that *denominational peace,* which heretofore characterized the unequaled growth and prosperity of our young and God-blessed country."

How passionately he felt on this subject appears in the comprehensive letter which he wrote in this same year (Feb. 17, 1871) to the *Jewish Times* under the caption "Church and State". The letter, called forth by the formation in Philadelphia of a society denominating themselves "The National Reformers" whose purpose was to have Christianity recognized officially

as the religion of the country and to have the constitution amended to this effect, is of such importance that although somewhat lengthy, it must be included here almost in its entirety. The eager combatant for the principles of American liberty reviewed the critical situation thus fully:

"This new party tries to christianize our nation. The clergy who are at the bottom of the whole movement are no longer satisfied with the proud name of 'America and American Nation'; no, we have to be called hereafter 'Christian Americans' and our country 'Christian America'!

"Nice times these, and a glorious movement this new organization! The trouble is that one can not reason either with bigotry or fanaticism; and that when we Jews protest against this nonsense the rejoinder is made: 'No wonder that the Jews, these old Egyptian petrified infidels, dislike this movement; they do not believe in our Lord Jesus Christ'. That we protest as Americans, or as a race that more than all others has experienced the bitter consequences of a union between church and state and like to warn other people not to revive this dangerous experiment—this fact you can not demonstrate to these modern inquisitors. For they are neuromaniacs in this regard and with such men both reason and history are played out.

"But what a shame to America—no, no, I mean to say to such degenerate Americans who are bent upon degrading and disgracing their God-blessed country in the eyes of all the world! How old, monarchical Europe must laugh in her sleeves at these proceedings in the model republic! While inquisitorial Spain, priest-ridden Italy, ultramontane Austria, and Hengstenberg-

Stahl-Prussia proclaim not only the equality of all citizens before the law, but the entire separation of church and state; while one after another adopts the broad principle of the immortal Count di Cavour, '*Chiesa libera in libero stato*'—'A free church in a free state', Americans are not ashamed of reviving the old exploded union and of recklessly throwing away the brightest gem in the American diadem, the priceless jewel of religious liberty.

"At the head of the movement in the state of Ohio is the Evangelical Association of this city. About three or four years ago, several ministers traveled on one of the Ohio railroads. Seriously discussing the state of religious affairs in this country, they resolved upon an 'aggressive policy'. Fearing the continuous growth of the Catholic Church, scared by her powerful organization and concerted action, and reviewing the numberless sects of their Protestant Church, they wished to counteract the growing influence of Rome, and to thwart the schemes and plots of the Jesuits.

"No course would have been more natural, in order to effect this aim, than to cling to the spirit of our constitution, to assert and to maintain at any price the separation of church and state and to oppose 'Roman Infallibility' by the repeated declaration of religious liberty. All pretensions of the Roman clergy to a division of the school fund, to donations from the public treasury for the support of sectarian institutions, would have been silenced by the words, 'The state has nothing to do with the church; the state ignores her altogether'.

"But instead of pursuing this wise and truly American policy they now hit upon the supreme folly of

christianizing the country and the constitution. By this misstep they are working nicely into the hands of the Jesuits. It is the same mistake, only in another shape and form, which they committed when introducing Catholic rites into some churches of the Episcopalians. The Jesuits, in course of time, would have battered such a breach into our laws anyhow; but they must feel very thankful if others spare them the trouble and do the odious work for them. The odium and reproach will then be cast on other shoulders than theirs. . . .

"The Catholics are arraying themselves under the banner of the new-fangled 'Papal Infallibility'; and their enormous mass meetings protesting against the abolition of the Pope's temporal power show and prove that they are well organized and at the command of their clergy. As soon as peace between France and Germany will have been declared, we shall hear of the contest to be fought in Europe between the Roman Catholic and the modern state, and in course of time we shall have our share in this, our inflammable and excitable country, too.

"On the other side, as soon as the Universal Evangelical Association will convince its delegates from Europe and America in New York, we shall undoubtedly hear of a kind of 'Protestant Infallibility'. Religious liberty, the right of conscience, and all such other modern trash will be entirely ignored, and the clergy and their hotspurred church members will vie with each other to outdo themselves in religious zeal and bigotry. It will become fashionable to add one's mite to the general agitation and the numbers of the 'legion of religious honor' will be increased beyond calculation. It will become profitable to play the hypo-

crite and to don the prophet's mantle; intolerance, proselytism and all other such theological virtues will be preached from all the pulpits; the missionaries will be in their highest glee and reap the richest harvest; and all this will be done 'to the glory of God and universal love', and for the sake of vivifying the old word 'peace and good will to all men'. You recollect how in the middle ages this noble word was translated into the sentence, 'Burn the body and save the soul'.

"Still I do not like to play the part of 'Cassandra'. I have too much faith in our constitution, in the sound common sense of the American people, in their justice and pride in national liberties, that they will ever allow themselves to be ruled and governed by any class of clergy.

"But vigilance is the price of liberty, and it needs concerted and courageous action to thwart all such nefarious schemes. If the right men in the right place will come out as boldly and defiantly as the clergy does; if, disregarding the interests of parties and politicians who wish to buy and secure votes at any price, they will appeal to the enlightened sense of the American people, the timid will be encouraged, the indifferent will be aroused and crowds will be gathered for the support of American right and liberty."[9]

And in an address on the same subject delivered at Washington the following May, he adjured his hearers:

"Let us conclude with the pertinent remark of our president, 'Let us have peace!' not only political, but also denominational peace! Let the dead past of fanaticism and bigotry bury its dead! Let ignorance

[9] *Jewish Times*, 804-5 (Feb. 17, 1871).

and superstition be dispelled by universal and free education! And 'with malice to none, with charity to all', with love and justice as God understands it, let us lift higher and higher our star-spangled banner, that it may float in all its heaven-born glory bringing to mankind as the glorious greeting of modern redemption the blessings of civil and religious liberty!"

It was during this same period that the famous case of the reading of the Bible in the public schools was tried in the courts of Ohio. The Cincinnati school board had resolved that the reading of the Bible in the public schools should be dispensed with. A citizen brought suit in the courts against the school board. The courts finally sustained the board. While the case was being tried, great excitement prevailed in the community and the attention of the entire country was fastened upon the Cincinnati episode. In this city itself passion ran high. Public meetings were held by both the friends and the opponents of the school board. As may well be supposed, among the most active supporters of the school board was Dr. Lilienthal, for whom the question of Bible reading in the public schools was part and parcel of the larger issue of the union of church and state. Little wonder, therefore, that he took an active part in the campaign for keeping the public schools free from all church affiliation. He recognized that the reading of the Bible in the schools was merely the opening wedge for the Protestantizing of the schools. In an address delivered at Mozart Hall, March 30, 1870, during the exciting interim that elapsed after the superior court had decided against the school board and the case was pending in the supreme court of the state to which the school board carried it, and where the decision sustaining the

board in its right to suspend the reading of the Bible in the schools was ultimately rendered, the rabbi, whose word carried great weight in the community, said pointedly:

"The Catholics denounce the public schools as godless and the hotbed of every vice and apply every opprobrious epithet to them. They demand a division of the school fund. What is to be done? Sectarianism must be removed from the schools in order that there may be no just ground left for this demand. But look to the Protestant side. The Protestants come now and say defiantly that this is a Protestant country. When I left Europe I came to this country because I believed it to be free, the God-blessed country of all the world.

"On one side of this controversy are the Protestants and on the other are the Catholics. Where in heaven's name are the Americans? Of course, the answer from the Protestants will be 'We Protestants are the Americans, and we Americans are Protestants'. I do not propose to answer the question myself, but instead will read from a letter written by Washington in May, 1779, addressed to the United Baptist Churches of Virginia:

" 'If I could have entertained the slightest apprehension that the constitution framed in convention where I had the honor to preside might possibly injure the rights of any ecclesiastical society, certainly I would never have placed my signature to it, and if I could now conceive that the general government might ever be so administered as to render the liberty of conscience insecure, I beg you will be persuaded that no one would be more zealous than myself to establish effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual

tyranny and every species of religious persecution, for you doubtless remember that I have often expressed my sentiments that every man conducting himself as a citizen and being accountable to God alone for his religious opinions ought to be protected in worshipping the Deity according to the dictates of his conscience'.

"So wrote Washington. Are we better than he was? Are we wiser than he was? Obstinacy is no wisdom, bigotry is no justice, fanaticism is no righteousness, and anyone who unfolds these banners will ruin this glorious country."

Some months previously, May 20, 1870, in his sermon at the dedication of the Temple at Vicksburg, Miss., he laid down what he considered the platform which Jews should support in this Bible-in-the-Schools controversy, as follows:

"1. Bible or no Bible, our children will visit the public schools. Our Sabbath schools and synagogs give us ample room and time to impart to them the required religious instruction.

"2. No division of the school fund, no matter under what pretext it may be demanded.

"3. Not a single penny out of the public funds for the support of any sectarian institution, be it for charitable or educational purposes.

"4. No union of state and church, under any shape and form whatsoever.

"These principles will save the Union and restore the denominational peace we have heretofore enjoyed and which we hope will be continued forevermore on the virgin soil of American happiness and liberty."[10]

[10] *Jewish Times,* 118, 213 (1870).

And finally let attention be called to the impressive words which he spoke on this subject before the State Teachers' Association of Indiana at Muncie, August 19, 1873, when he said in his address on "Liberty and Popular Education":

"Our free schools are decried and defamed as godless. This is the stigma with which they are branded and derided. 'Stay away from these godless institutions', is the warning given by a certain class of papers and reiterated and reechoed by thousands of voices.

"Well, we shall take the hint. Efficient and excellent as our schools are, we shall still more improve them. Instead of being godless, an assertion which we deny *in toto,* we shall make them godful, thoroughly godful, preeminently and essentially godful. Of course, not in the sense in which our opponents and rivals understand this word. We shall not make them sectarian in order to please this or that class of pious votaries. No, we shall adhere to the fundamental principle of our institutions, in the full separation of church and state. We shall continue to use all means to have our public institutions undisturbed and not permeated by sectarian strife and bigoted narrow-mindedness. . . . To this genuine American motto 'Separation of church and state, entire and complete', to this motto, which is now going to be copied almost all over Europe, we hope to cling to the very last. Still we intend to make our schools, our free schools, godful in the noblest sense of the word. . . . How can be accomplish this noble aim and purpose? When besides carrying out the course of study prescribed and entrusted to your care, in letter and in spirit you shall imbue into the minds of the youth all the noble principles which will make them

moral men, good citizens and useful members of society. . . . Let the Sabbath schools of every denomination instruct the children in those doctrines which their denomination teaches and proclaims; this will be a private affair with which we, as citizens, have neither the right nor the intention to interfere. But in our schools, where our youths meet as American youths, we shall try to inspire them with the principles which, when faithfully carried out, will find favor in the eyes of God and man."[11]

Thus bravely, fearlessly and constantly did this true American patriot contend for the principles to which he was devoted with all his heart and soul. Advocate of peace among all men and notably among the followers of the various religious denominations though he was, yet he never permitted his desire for peace to becloud the issue when underlying principles of liberty were at stake. And his great services in this cause will never be forgotten. Among the great Jewish leaders of his time he was particularly known for this note in his preaching and teaching.

No occasion of importance was permitted to pass by him without being used to adorn the tale of patriotism. During the crucial months immediately preceding the Civil War, he preached a number of sermons for the preservation of the Union; in these sermons he deprecated the differences between the North and the South and urged the adoption of measures for the continuation of peaceful relations between the two sections of the country. At the close of the war and upon the occasion of the assassination of President Lincoln he delivered two notable addresses which are

[11] *Israelite,* XIX, 2 (September 19, 1873).

included among his writings in the latter half of this volume. And after the war when conditions in the South were so appalling he delivered a strong appeal entitled "Relief for the South", in which he urged his people to come forward and help bind up the wounds which the terrible years of war and bloodshed had made. Throughout his life he rose to every occasion when love of country required a spokesman. He never faltered nor hesitated when he thought that cherished liberties were endangered. For him America was the new Promised Land where Israel had found a home after medieval oppression even as in the ancient time it had found a home in Palestine, the Promised Land of old, after Egyptian oppression. His entire career was devoted to expounding this doctrine; his words quoted throughout this chapter and the many more not included were a commentary upon this text which he put in many ways, but in none more succinctly than when in the Washington discourse on church and state he said: "We have given up all ideas of ever returning to Palestine and establishing there an independent nationality. All our affections belong to this country which we love and revere as our home and the home of our children." This was the ideal he ever held before him; American rabbi was he in every sense of the word, interpreting the teachings of prophetic Judaism in the terms of American aspiration, and glorifying the Jewish name and Jewish truth in the eyes of all the people. Thus served he his God, his country and his fellowmen, and his name is recorded high on the register of those who throughout the ages fought the brave fight for liberty, right and truth.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CLOSING YEARS.

The closing years of Lilienthal's life were saddened by the appearance of anti-Semitism in Germany and the anti-Jewish excesses in Russia which brought to these shores the thousands of unhappy creatures who had been driven from the realm of the czar by the enactment of new measures of repression and the re-enforcement of old laws which had been in abeyance during the reign of Alexander II, the Liberator Czar. Often during the last two years of his life did the writer, who at that time was a pupil of the great rabbi, hear him discuss in disheartened tones the latter-day events in the history of his coreligionists. The Russian horrors carried his thoughts back to the days of his early career in Russia and seemed to emphasize the hopelessness of the Jewish situation in that land. The phrase of Koheleth was frequently on his lips, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!" All his high hopes so frequently expressed in glowing terms of brotherhood and humanity and so ardently worked for during his toilsome American career of well-nigh four decades, seemed crumbling into dust. The death in February, 1882, of Berthold Auerbach, the great German novelist, which was hastened, if not caused, by the anti-Semitic outbreaks in Germany, depressed his greatly. Auerbach, like Lilienthal, had been a modern prophet of humanity and had written and worked in the cause of the better understanding and

the closer affiliation with one another of men of all creeds and nationalities. A despairing note was now heard in his preaching which formerly was characterized by optimism. Still, despite the clouds that darkened the horizon, he still hoped for better things when the temporary aberration would have passed. In an essay which appeared shortly before his death, entitled "The Jew a Riddle", and which in all likelihood was the last thing he wrote, he dwelt upon the new anti-Jewish crusade, but expressed his faith in the coming of a better day. In that essay he wrote:

"But this storm will pass away. The Jew knows it. During the eighteen centuries of his wandering, he the riddle, the living mummy, as he is nicknamed, has learned how 'to labor and to wait'. He will wisely use the interim to adapt himself to altered conditions and circumstances. And he will succeed, for adaptability is one of his recognized characteristics. He will throw off the stained rags of the pariah and don the toga of the free citizen, of the free man, in the noble and proud sense of the word. He will never surrender his abiding faith in a better future of the human race. He will still hope and trust that the time must come in which the doctrine of the common Fatherhood of God and of the common brotherhood of man will not be barren phraseology, uttered either in the pulpit or the forum, but will become a stern reality, an undoubted matter of fact. Then racial antipathy, racial persecution, will be either ridiculed as a nightmare or be pitied as temporary insanity!"[1]

With these high words of hope of a better future ringing in our ears we might well take leave of this

[1] *Hebrew Review,* II, 128.

lofty spirit, this friend of humanity, this disciple of the prophets, this friend of peace.

If a few pages more are now added it is with the purpose that the remaining paragraphs of this sketch, offered as a loving tribute by the writer to the memory of his inspiring teacher, his never-to-be-forgotten friend and famed predecessor in the pulpit, on the occasion of the forthcoming centenary of his birth, may be devoted to a brief consideration of the outstanding traits that made him what he was.

As has appeared time and again in the preceding pages, Dr. Lilienthal was animated throughout his life by the peace motive. He had a fine knowledge of men. He knew that in life there must be give and take if anything is to be accomplished. This was the statesmanlike quality in his makeup. He felt that men had to be taken as they are, not as he would have had them be. For this reason those who did not understand him accused him of compromising, of hypocrisy and of time serving. When in Russia in his desire to gain the support of the ultraorthodox Jews and of the Chassidim for the high aim towards which he was striving, he observed rites and customs with which he was known to be at variance in his thought, he was denounced as a hypocrite by his enemies; but the truth of the matter was that he considered such a concession as of slight importance when compared with the large end in view, namely, the obtaining of the sympathy of this great section of Russian Jewry for the educational work proposed. So also time and again in this country he was accused of being a compromiser on the one hand by the reformers who made a fetish of consistency, and on the other by orthodox irreconcilables who would not have a jot or tittle of

inherited ceremonies and customs changed. Being a man of great insight and wisdom, he recognized that practical reforms can be accomplished effectively by an accommodation to the changing circumstances of time and place. He knew full well that neither life nor history move in a straight line and that the greatest victories for progress are frequently gained by a rounding of difficulties and obstacles by circuitous routes. But when a matter of real principle was involved he showed time and again that he could be firm as a rock; his departure from Russia relinquishing a great future proved this to the full; his defense of the reform movement against his doughty antagonist, the Rev. Isaac Leeser, and his constant struggle as detailed in the preceding pages against the forces of religious bigotry in their onslaught on the integrity of American institutions bear testimony to his consistency when high principle was at stake.

Throughout his career he aimed to smooth the rough waters of controversy and dissension. For this reason he was called so frequently even during his lifetime "the prince of peace". He was distressed by the factious differences that divided his brethren in the ministry into warring groups. He used his best offices to remove these differences. More than this could no man do. He was truly one of the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace. It occasions little surprise, therefore, that he considered his success in forming the literary rabbinical association which included in its membership men who had been bitterly antagonistic to one another as the crowning achievement of his life. He lived to see the breach repaired; under his gentle and calming guidance the rabbis of the east and west met in conference and

arbitrated their differences. The Rabbinical Literary Association, which did not survive its founder, anticipated by nine years the foundation of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, which, comprising as it does in its membership well-nigh every reform rabbi of the country, realizes fully the purposes of the first great reconciler among the rabbis of this country.

For thirty-seven years he worked in this spirit of peace and reconciliation in the land of his love and adoption. This is his greatest claim to fame and to the gratitude of his coreligionists and his fellow countrymen.

When the last hour of his earthly life struck on April 5, 1882, his place in American Jewry's hall of fame was secure. As Jewish leader and as American patriot he had toiled untiringly and unselfishly. He had spoken golden words of eternal truth on many an important occasion. In appearance every inch the leader, he had gone in and out among his people, a messenger of the Lord of Hosts. Four weeks after his demise a service was held in the religious home he loved so well, the temple of the congregation, at which sincere tributes of appreciation were spoken by his life-long friend and coworker, Isaac M. Wise, and other leaders in American Jewry, Rabbis Henry S. Jacobs and Jacob Voorsanger, as well as by two of Ohio's greatest citizens, General Jacob D. Cox and Judge J. B. Stallo. The eloquent words with which the latter closed his oration characterize finely the outlook of the lofty spirit whom he was eulogizing: "His longing was for the future, not for the past. 'Forward and upward' was his motto. His Messiah was not a single man, but reason and its fine effects.

His promised country was not one narrow speck of earth, but the whole broad universe. His brethren were not only those to whose race he belonged—every one who furthered the aims of humanity was his brother and friend. It is in this sense that we meet here, one great brotherhood to mourn the loss of a dearly beloved brother. I can best close with the fervent hope that his spirit may continue in his people forever and aye. Then will be verified the words of Goethe in his Tasso that 'the place where a great man has lived remains a fruitful seed for all generations'."

One hundred years have passed since Max Lilienthal first saw the light of day. During that century the spirit of freedom has won great victories. Despite occasional relapses the progress achieved in the cause of liberty is very marked. Freedom was the breath of Lilienthal's nostrils. He was a true apostle of liberty. Aristocratic in thought and bearing, he was democratic in life and principle. America embodied for him the hope of humanity. The upholding of American principles was a passion with him. American Judaism, combining loyalty to the high teachings of Judaism with fealty to the basic institutions of American liberty, and the high hopes for a united humanity, represented for him the flower of the endeavor of the ages. In inspired mood he at one time defined this ideal in words that glow with loyalty to a great past and hope for a glorious future.

"Resting with its roots in deep antiquity," so run his words, "it still branches forth like a sound, healthy oak tree. It tries to adapt itself to the advanced ideas of the age, to become reconciled with the results of science, and, without surrendering its special characteristics, to preach humanity instead of racial an-

tipathy, reason instead of blind faith, the living spirit instead of the dead letter.

"It has inscribed on its banner the glorious words of the common Fatherhood of God and the common brotherhood of man and believes *In hoc signo vinces.* With Catholic and Protestant, with Mohammedan and Buddhist, it hopes and waits for that kingdom of heaven on earth in which the redemption of the human family will become a blessed reality, so that virtue and justice and unsectarian brotherly love may reign supreme, and evil and hatred may be numbered among the things of the past."[2]

[2] *Hebrew Review,* II, 133.

WRITINGS.

FAMILY LETTERS.

FAMILY LETTERS.[1]

I.

(*To his Father*)

St. Petersburg, Oct. 25, 1839.

Dear Father and all of you, my beloved!

I am weeping tears, tears of deepest, inexpressible longing while I write you these lines which are to inform you of my arrival here. Baron Falkenberg promises to see that the letter reaches its destination and I have only a short half hour before the Sabbath in which to write to you. O my beloved, I saw much, very much on my journey: Halle, Madgeburg, Hamburg, Lübeck, the sea (the dreadful seasickness had me in its grip a whole day), those colossal steamers; Kronstadt, large and glorious; but St. Petersburg! this exceeds all expectations. A city five miles in circumference—nothing but palaces—surely this is to be seen nowhere else. Whoever has not seen St. Petersburg has not seen the world. Another city may have

[1] These very interesting letters (some in German, others in French) written from Russia by Dr. Lilienthal to members of his family are now published for the first time. They have been placed at my disposal by the children of Dr. Lilienthal. In the nature of the case, the letters contain passages which are of too intimate a character for the public eye. Hence only such portions of the letters have been selected as were felt to be of public interest.—D. P.

possibly more people, but not more magnificence and beauty. But to the matter in hand! Baron Falkenberg has received me in the most friendly manner. Dear father, please express to his sister my heartiest thanks for the kindly reception. The Minister Lerchenfeld received me with uncommon heartiness; he went personally to the Minister Uwaroff and secured an audience for me for next Sunday at twelve o'clock. A parade takes place tomorrow which I want to see; it consists of the regiments which are quartered here, containing as many soldiers as the whole Bavarian army; it numbers 60,000 men. From Riga you shall receive a four-paged letter which will tell you fully about Philippson, Salomon, Kley, Steinheim, Altona, etc. Fare ye well, and remember in love him who has been starving for eight days, but whose heart is nevertheless full; full of love for you; to attest this every hour will be the effort of

Yours affectionately,

Dr. Max Lilienthal.

II.

(*To the Same*)

St. Petersburg, Nov. 1, 1839.

Dear Father:

I have written an explicit letter of three pages on a most important subject. I hope this letter will be in your hands in fourteen days at the latest. The purpose of the present letter is to ask you to go to Baron Maltitz and to request him to furnish me with another copy of the legalized testimonial which he was so good as to give me. I had to deliver the one I had to the

authorities here; I will experience some obstacles in Riga, where I am to settle, unless I receive the testimonial from you by return of post. Will you be so good as to address it to Benjamin Nachman, in Riga, since I must remain here perhaps three weeks longer because Uwaroff left for Warsaw on the day of my arrival here? You can not imagine how this information grieved me, otherwise everything would have progressed so favorably. Lerchenfeld had promised to secure me the audience all in vain. . . .

I will remain here, therefore, fourteen days longer; in the meantime I hope that you will surely attend to the matter of securing the testimonial for me. I have received two letters from the Riga people; in the one they sent me 50 R. T. additional; in the other they informed me of the departure of their communal representative Ilgisch, who is to welcome me in their name and be helpful to me here in all things. The Jews of Riga have still a hard contest with the city as an inhabitant of Riga who happened to be here told me; still they have the Minister of the Interior, Count Stroganoff, on their side. The school building is situated in the center of the city; it consists of eleven rooms, five of which are intended for me and are already furnished. I hear the rabbi will be dismissed and his functions will be delegated to me perhaps already during this winter, so that I will be a rabbi before many Bavarian candidates. Meanwhile, with God's help, this will be only the first step, although the Jews here are still backward and oppressed. I am boarding now in the house of a soldier's wife, since such have all privileges here. I am thus freed from my former dreadful state. I hope to officiate at the marriage of six couples in Riga this winter.

I shall be glad to get away from here, for this dreadful excitement robs one of all deliberation, and after all, St. Petersburg is not the place of my destination. Yesterday I viewed a parade of sixty thousand men, twelve regiments, thirty-six thousand infantry, two regiments of cuirassiers, one regiment of dragoons, one regiment of horse guards, one regiment of hussars, one regiment of uhlans, three companies of Cossacks, three hundred Circassians with bows, arrows and armor, one regiment of pontoon builders on horseback and perhaps eighty cannon. The huzzaing of this multitude when the czar appeared and asked, "Children, are you well?" Among us maneuvers are advertised a half year in advance and for six months thereafter descriptions thereof are published, and then sixteen thousand men appear; while here ten to fifteen thousand men exercise daily. Everything here is thus colossal and indescribable; I am giving you a few weak strokes of this picture.

My hearty and deep-felt greetings to all. Again asking you to attend to securing the testimonial, I am, with love,

Your grateful son,
Dr. M. Lilienthal.

III.

(*To his Fiancee, Miss Pepi Nettre*)

Riga, Feb. 21, 1840.

I am exceedingly occupied here. Since the people here are in no wise educated as I would wish and as German methods require, tasks of all kinds fall to my lot. I am acting as presiding officer of the Orphan

Association, as member of the school commission, the congregational board and the synagog committee; I must keep the books and the accounts for the school —this consumes very much time; I preach every three weeks, and give confirmation instruction five hours to boys and five hours to girls weekly. I am at my studies at five o'clock in the morning; at eight o'clock I begin instruction in the school and am occupied there and with work for the various societies till four o'clock; from five to six I impart confirmation instruction; thereafter I attend whatever meetings may be scheduled.

IV.

(*To his Father and Mr. Isaac Nettre, his Prospective Father-in-law*)

(Do not read this letter if anyone is present.)

Riga, September 16, 1840.

Dear Father and *Honored Mr. Nettre:*

. . . First as to the reason of my long silence. . . . I was so exhausted by ceaseless tasks that I was unable to undertake any more work; I had worked so constantly, so unrestrainedly and with such youthful fiery zeal that all my strength vanished and I felt completely faint. In addition I was afflicted with constant headaches and a dreadful burning on my chest, and with it all I had to carry on my official duties which could not be postponed. I always came from the school completely worn out; preaching exhausted me and I succumbed. I was advised to take baths in the neighboring Baltic, and I hurried thither

and took twenty sea baths, after which I returned home strengthened and refreshed. . . . Tasks and unpleasant occurrences combined to cast me once again on the sick bed; a fever fastened on me, and for the first time a mustard plaster was applied to me and I took medicine once again after the lapse of ten years. Thank God, I am now completely restored to health except for an occasional pain in my chest. In this entirely true report you can find a good excuse for my long silence.

A second reason is the intolerable burden of tasks which are imposed on me; of these you can have no real conception. Do you think for a moment that I have as much leisure as a Bavarian rabbi? Nay, my beloved, this is not the case. I am the only person of my profession within a radius of five hundred miles, and I am the only Jewish preacher in the great domain of 28,000 geographical miles. How many visitors do you think must be seen every day, how many letters answered every week, and that, too, not superficially, but as thoroughly as expected, carefully and well thought out? From how many localities do I not receive petitions and requests, since mine is the only voice in this wilderness! The consideration of these things, since they are of importance in their consequences for me, may not be put off, but must receive immediate attention. In addition to all this, I must teach from four to six hours daily. Besides, there are reviews with my pupils, preparation for my sermons, occasional addresses, visits to the sick, care for the poor and other official duties. . . .

Now, as to my position. When I think of my relation to the officials, how I am favored by the minister (and I am treated with real fatherly consideration),

when I observe how kindly the Jew[2] is judged and how he is being encouraged, when I consider the possibilities of the future, I would exchange places with none of my colleagues in Germany, and I look upon myself as richer in honor and glory than they. But when, on the other hand, I think of the condition and the position of the youth and of the Jews in this country, that fair picture is sadly obscured. For in the first place the poverty of the Russian Jews exceeds even the wildest imagination that we Germans can indulge. People with 5000 gulden pass for rich in this country. Men who possess 100,000 gulden are exceptions, as the Herr von Hirsch;[3] of such you will scarcely meet one every one hundred miles, Warsaw, Moscow and Odessa excepted. But the poorest congregation of all is that in Riga. With the exception of one firm, Berkowitz Brothers, who possess possibly a capital of 15,000 dollars and a very good business, the whole congregation consists of people none of whom possess 500 dollars. . . . And whence comes this sad condition? Jews were never permitted to live in Riga. This city, whose commercial activities are so extensive that it is called a smaller London or Hamburg, and is rightly considered the commercial metropolis of Russia, consists altogether of merchants who insisted on their old Swedish and German privileges with mercantile exactitude and care, sought by means of their wealth to prevent the enactment of any law changing this state of affairs, and defied any and all external pressure. (I risk very much in writing these lines,

[2] Referring to himself, not the Jew generically.

[3] Joseph von Hirsch, the Jewish Croesus of Munich. He was the father of the noted philanthropist, Baron Maurice de Hirsch.

since the postoffice opens the letters, but you have so beset me, that I am taking the risk to write these things, although the secret police keep strict watch over all correspondence and there is a great desire to know my opinions.)

In 1835 the well-known ukase appeared by which all rights were granted also to the Jews.[4] These poor people, the greatest portion of whom, with the exception of eighteen to twenty families, are old clothes dealers, received this information with great joy and took steps to begin a new life by opening stores or shops. But the city, which is immensely rich, opposed the ukase, declared that this command was an oversight on the part of the lawgivers and insisted that the Jews be expelled from Riga to a neighboring place (illegible). The trial has been proceeding for five years, and during this time the Jews have put forth every possible effort to win their case. The idea occurred to them to establish a school; they believed that if the emperor would grant them the permission to build this in Riga, they would be firmly established here. The plan was approved; the cost was met by a meat tax which was to be imposed, however, not on the native Jews, but on the many foreign Jews who sojourn here for a time for the transaction of business. Of the 1,000 dollars that the tax produces I receive 300 dollars; I receive an additional 100 dollars as preacher—this income is equivalent to no more than 400 gulden among us at home. . . .

Transport yourself fifty years back in Germany when there were five hundred בחורים[5] in Fürth, and as many in Frankfort and Mainz, when the Jew was

[4] That is, in Riga.

[5] Students at the *Yeshibah,* the Hebrew academy.

bearded and wore a mantle and a broad cap, and even then you would have a very weak facsimile of conditions here. The Jew in his dirty *feschka* or cap, with his torn *Schubetze,* deems himself, thanks to the old אתה בחרתנו[6] superior to king and emperor; he despises all education, hates all culture, opposes all good manners, misinterprets every effort at enlightenment, understands not a German word, hence also not my German sermons either, and you say, "Why do you not petition the minister for another position?" Oh, how it pains and grieves me often in my innermost soul when I stand before my congregation, which, with the strangers present, numbers from four to six hundred auditors, and I must confess to myself that two-thirds of them do not know at what I am driving. How often have not my friends told me how the Russians scoff, and thus wound me deeply! And yet Mr. Nettre writes, "There is no doubt that provision can be made for your livelihood". Is this really true beyond the peradventure of a doubt? Well, you will say, return; but, do you really believe this to be so easy? Where are the many vacant positions? where the places in which one can establish himself? and secondly, am I to relinquish so readily the career upon which I have entered? Am I to believe that God has cast me into Russia merely to humor a whim, and that he will thrust me forth again at His pleasure? I think otherwise when I consider what I have accomplished in seven months. . . .

[6] The belief that the Jews are the chosen people.

V.

(*To his Brother Samuel*)

Riga, Dec. 12-24, 1840.

Dearest, most beloved brother:

It is now eighteen months since we separated. The imaginings of youthful dreams have vanished; the hopes of former years have failed of realization; the storm of agitated life has cast us far, far away into undreamt-of foreign parts; reality has laid hold upon us, and oh, my brother, what has become of us? Are we in a fair way of realizing our wishes? What have you achieved? What begun? What accomplished? For what do you hope, what are your expectations, your wishes, of what would you partake? Oh, I would question you concerning every emotion of your heart, every wish of your mind, every thought of your soul, so as to assist you by counsel, aid and comfort and thus know myself happy and contented in your happiness; but this is not the case. Who knows when will strike the hour of the eagerly longed-for reunion when I will receive the answer to all these questions from you, my dear Samuel? What we will tell one another up to that time is only the meager sketch, the skeleton of the great experiences and phenomena of life which pass by us; but how happy am I to hear from you in some detail concerning these. Our dear ones have not indicated by a word the things that you have written me; I beg of you to write me in your next as circumstantial a report as you are now receiving from me.

On the eighth day of October, 1839, I left my father's house. You know the pain of farewell;

wherefore then picture it, wherefore reopen the wound that has begun to close? I spent some time with Philippson,[7] a tall, spare, young man with an old face marked by lines of study and experience, with eyes reddened and weakened by nocturnal vigils, with unruly hair and of unusual eloquence. I spent a fine day in his home; the remembrance of contact with a great . . . man, has an enlivening and inspiring effect, and his picture floats before me as an inspiration in many a fateful and trying hour. He gave me references to the congregation; however, I did not deliver these since I did not feel that I needed them because of other steps that I had taken before my arrival there.[8] On Sunday, October 14, I traveled by steamer on the river Elbe from Magdeburg to Hamburg; this trip was enjoyable in its beginning, but soon became a trying preclude to the ocean voyage to St. Petersburg. On the sixteenth I was in Hamburg and met Dr. Salomon, a corpulent man of attractive, witty and hearty conversation (you know him as preacher; he has four sons, all clever, and a *fille amiable mais promise*), and Dr. Kley, a small, thin, sickly, slender, sniffling man, without children and with much money, less heart, hence more spirit. In Altona I met Dr. Steinheim, the Maimonides of our day. He has a well-proportioned large head and bald forehead which is constantly agitated by thoughts and contemplation. These are three interesting acquaintances.

The Hamburg temple[9] did not fulfil my expectations, but the synagog at Altona far exceeded them.

[7] Ludwig Philippson, through whose recommendation to Uwaroff Lilienthal was called to Russia.

[8] Riga.

[9] The first temple of reformed Judaism in Europe. This

On the eighteenth I was in Lübeck, a free imperial city, of no significance and without special spirit. On the nineteenth I was on the way to St. Petersburg on the big steamer Nicolai. You are well acquainted with sea voyages; you know how they amaze us Bavarians who have never seen ship nor sail. On the twenty-fourth I arrived in St. Petersburg, the most beautiful, cleanest and finest city in the world. Who can describe the emotions aroused by the trip up the Neva, which in a straight line flows majestically by majestic buildings? Having set foot on land, you ride by the Peter monument, the Senate, the Admiralty, the imperial palace, the columns, the Nevsky prospect and you have seen the most beautiful and amazing sight in the world.

But the unseen was of more concern to me than the outer, and a letter of recommendation which I had received from the Russian Embassy was the key which opened doors for me and with the help of God, the All-Father, also the door of good fortune. I had seven audiences with His Excellency Uwaroff, the Minister of Education, and I secured not only his personal good will, but also his fatherly interest, God willing. I was presented to the Minister of the Interior, Count Stroganoff, seven times and secured his good will in surprising fashion. I had journeyed thither at the wish of the congregation[10] to intercede in their interest, for they are engaged at present in the struggle to secure the right of citizenship. In the carrying out of my commission I won the friendship of many prominent men who were most helpful to me.

Hamburg reform congregation was one of the storm centers of the early years of the Reform Movement in Judaism.

[10] Of Riga, see above.

Having convinced myself that the congregation would experience great difficulty in achieving its purpose and that for this reason the position of the school is very precarious, which anyone who is at all familiar with the conditions in this country readily perceives, I sought to pave the way for a future rich in possibilities by submitting to said ministers a plan for the establishment of consistories, which was received with much favor. Having thus secured the favor of the ministers (one must never neglect an opportunity) I received on this account a recommendation from Uwaroff to the director, Napierski.

The school system is modeled on the state administration. Russia has six governors-general subordinate to the Minister of the Interior; each of these has under him officials like our governors of nobility; for example, Livland, Essland and Kurland are ruled by three civil governors, who are under the governor-general, Baron von Pahlen, and the last named is under the minister. Then also Russia has six universities, with a curator at the head of each of them; under the curator are the directors, each one of whom superintends all the schools of a province. As mentioned above, I received a letter of recommendation from the minister to the director of schools in Livland, and as you can well imagine, I was well recommended. The subordination customary in this country is strictly observed by all classes.

As soon as I arrived in Riga, viz.: on January 12, I began my plans for the school, which was opened from the sixteenth to the eighteenth. The reason for my haste was in the first place to realize as quickly as possible the purpose of my being here, and secondly, to convince the minister that he had not bestowed his

favor on an unworthy person. The solemn opening of the school aroused the attention of the whole community. The city, inimically inclined to the Jews, was astounded to hear a German word from a Jew, something which had never been experienced here where the Jew, as may be said without exaggeration, is six centuries behind his coreligionists in Germany. I had my address printed and sent it broadcast among the *"Kahal"*,[11] to the emperor and the minister, without, however, subscribing my personal signature, since I felt that I would not be forgotten if it met with favor, and also that I would not be mentioned should they be displeased. The minister sent me a personal hearty letter of thanks, in which he mentioned that he had had my address translated into Russian. The Minister of the Interior presented my name to the emperor as deserving of reward, and I received from the emperor a costly diamond ring, accompanied by a special document wherein I was notified of the greatest satisfaction of the monarch.

I took steps immediately thereafter to introduce the confirmation ceremony, and since on the one hand the boys had to attend school first in order to receive religious instruction, and on the other hand a number were not yet thirteen years old, I announced a confirmation class for girls. Seven grown maidens attended the first session of the confirmation class, which began four months before the Feast of Weeks; this number grew to twenty-five. At first the parents did not comprehend what all this meant; some of them wanted to introduce their daughters to me *in spe matrimonii;* others wanted to see what the out-

[11] Congregation.

come would be; still others were amazed when they heard that the German spoke of God—they wondered how this was possible on the part of the *Apikoros*[1] without a beard and without the Polish *Kapuzner*;[2] but they finally perceived that that which was called confirmation meant nothing more than instruction in the holiest, most exalted interests of human kind. Wherefore it happened gradually that now the mother, now the daughter and again mother and daughter came and asked permission to participate in the instruction. The mistrust, however, was still apparent in the manner of the request; but no indication must be given that this is noticed, nor that it causes annoyance. Oh, self-control is a great virtue; in fact, one should never be nettled, or at least should not break forth in gruff, angry words; truth and right must be championed with calmness, control, earnestness and dignity against falsehood and malice.

I banished the mistrust of the parents by kindly tactics and secured their respect by explaining away their error, and won their gratitude and love by the instruction. However the Polish Jews now revolted and declared that a young unmarried man could impossibly be in the company of so many girls without awakening unchaste sensations, and therefore the instruction ought to be given by the rabbi, a learned Jew, who was very friendly to me. I pacified this old man, who is altogether without any worldly experience, by showing him to what danger he exposed himself from the government by making any such pronouncement. He held his peace. I continued to impart the instruction, holding the wretched insinuations beneath

[1] Hebrew for atheist.

[2] The garment worn by the Polish Jew.

contempt, and the confirmation service was an inspiring celebration. The sermon will be published in my volume of sermons;[14] it reconciled all parties. The most fanatical sectaries of the Chassidim of various classes of Russian Jews came to hear the sermon on the second day. I spoke on the משיח[15] and called upon all to unite in faith for the sake of קידוש השם.[16] After the sermon we had a veritable love feast. I continued to preach with zeal throughout the summer and was delighted to see how the Polish Jews attended in constantly growing numbers; frequently too, I had the uneasy consciousness of not being understood and hence misquoted. The preacher here is in a peculiar situation. At home the congregation meets the preacher half way, inasmuch as they come to the service with the purpose of being edified. Here, the congregation and the visiting auditors, the latter of whom regard the sermon as a desecration, attend with the purpose of criticizing or of being entertained, and only when they weep and their own tears attest the influence of the sermon, or they cease their violent protestations against the preacher and say that he has a . . . [17] mouth, i. e., he is a fine speaker. For this reason I must always, though against my will, appeal to the emotions.

I have not been able thus far to introduce other changes into the synagog, since even the more enlightened party does not comprehend how there can be devotion and heartfelt prayer without loud ejaculations and violent motions. I have been able to re-

[14] *Predigten in der Synagoge zu Riga* (Riga, 1841).
[15] The Messiah.
[16] The Sanctification of God's name.
[17] Illegible.

move only the crassest abuses by unwearying persistence. In the meantime I have sown the seed for much future work and with God's help a bright and active future will be mine. You know that I am not given to speaking much of chimeras. Action first and then speech; calm reflection, and quick accomplishment at the proper moment, such must be the mottos for us young fighters in the arena of life. I would gladly tell you the fundamental principles upon which I act; the idea which informs my doings; but my situation is so difficult, the conditions so diverse and contradictory, requiring so much cunning, skill and sad to say, intrigue, that it is impossible for many reasons to set these things forth in a letter, written here. Silence, keeping one's own council, quiet and well-considered speech are the manner and the conditions of ascent on the ladder of life. All this is different among you; all things must be adjudged according to local conditions. . . .

VI.

(*To his Fiancee*)

St. Petersburg, Sept. 3, 1842.

Pray tell me what reward you think I should accept—honorary citizenship, money or the medal of the Anna Order? Girls have much more taste in these matters than we; advise me in your next letter. . . .

VII.

(*To the Same*)

St. Petersburg, July 5, 1843.

My heartiest congratulations on the marriage of Marie[18] and the betrothal of Sophie[19] and Caroline.[20] You, you, alone have ever known and recognized how dearly I love my own people, and therefore, there is no need to assure you that I am very happy in the thought that four of our dear ones have found their life's happiness with God's help. I do not know whether the girls will still be in Munich when you receive this letter since you have written me that they will leave for America on July 1. If they are still with you, tell Caroline that I am very proud to know that she is the wife of my dear Samuel. These words express all that I think, hope, feel and desire, for you know, if you will recall it to mind, how Samuel and I always walked arm in arm, what Samuel is to me; hence, for whose domestic happiness can I feel so concerned as for his who is so inexpressibly dear to me? But I have no right to feel concerned. I have cause only for joy in the knowledge that his happiness is so assured in having a wife like Caroline, the joy of his heart. . . . If they have already departed, be sure to write me circumstantially everything connected with the leave taking; for you can not know of what interest everything, even the most trivial happening, is to him who lives in loveless foreign parts.

[18] A sister of Pepi Nettre (later Mrs. Lilienthal) married to H. L. Dreyfoos, rabbi in Bischviller, Alsace.

[19] A sister of Lilienthal married to Dr. John Lehmeier.

[20] A sister of Pepi Nettre married to Dr. Samuel Lilienthal, brother of Max.

VIII.

(*To Mr. Isaac Nettre*)

St. Petersburg, July 5-17, 1843.

Mr. I. Nettre, Munich,
Dear Father:

. . . My advice is that you send Philip[21] to America. Caroline[22] would then have a brother and he a sister there. And if he would follow the legal profession, agronomy or business, he would find opportunities there which he would not have the least idea of in France or Germany. Now that Germans of high character are gaining an upper hand in the North American free states, now that the monetary crisis seems to be passing and credit is being reestablished, now that the western colonies or states are making such rapid strides forward, a future of industrial and commercial activity is to be looked for, such as is not likely in Germany and in Europe where narrow-minded nationalism is on the increase. . . . I hope nothing for the Jews in Europe, everything in America.

IX.

(*To his Father*)

St. Petersburg, November 11-23, 1843.

Dear Father:

I have delayed writing till today partly because I wanted to wait for the arrival of the minister, partly

[21] Dr. Philip Nettre, the brother of Lilienthal's fiancee.
[22] Wife of Dr. Samuel Lilienthal.

because I expected a letter from our beloved in America and further because I wanted to gratify your wish that I might be able to give you some explicit information. But the minister[23] who has been expected daily for the past four weeks has not yet arrived and must have tarried, perhaps in Vienna, whence a communication from him to the ministry was received during the past week; hence, I am unable to write you anything more explicit. I have asked for permission to go to Munich; but the permission was denied me, partly because my affairs are now moving along; partly because I was advised and quite correctly, that I ought to wait until some definite outcome was apparent. Meanwhile, although with God's help I am justified in looking for the best results from the arrival of the minister, still I feel that matters will scarcely be consummated as quickly as we wish; for when I was here the first time in February, 1841, I was told that matters would be consummated by the end of the year; now we are already at the end of 1843, and negotiations have still far to go before they are finished. Therefore, I believe, as a ministerial counselor said this week, that we will find other ways out before the matter will be finally settled.

In the interim, having been appointed for this Jewish matter, I am working daily with all the officials of our division from ten to three o'clock; for these are the office hours at the ministry; and when I consider how happy people in Germany feel at the thought of sitting and working at the same table with ministerial counselors, I have nothing to add touching my position. Meanwhile, what will make life here in St.

[23] Uwaroff.

Petersburg not very pleasant should I be stationed here definitely is the separation from all Jews. True, the seven hundred Jewish soldiers who are doing garrison duty here in the various regiments numbering seventy thousand men have two small synagogs, but they attend only on Saturday.[24] I am boarding in such a soldier's home. True, the circle of my acquaintances is growing from day to day and I am received in great noble houses as a most intimate house friend. But that intercourse with Jews, who love, feel, suffer, believe and hope as do we is missing here, and hence also, the most pleasant hours that I used to enjoy formerly. I have not preached in two years. And if we, officials and staff officers, had not several learned circles in which we practice speaking, I would lose almost entirely the ability to speak extemporaneously. For this very reason we have organized two societies that meet in the evening when we are at leisure; these are pleasant in every way and highly beneficial. They permit me to forget for a time that I am deprived of the pleasure of living among Jews, a deprivation which only increases my longing to pass a few weeks with you and I hope that I will be able to inform you soon after the arrival of the minister how soon this happiness will be mine. . . .

[24] Reference is here made to the custom of orthodox Jews to attend services daily.

X.

(*To Mr. Isaac Nettre*)

St. Petersburg, July 6-18, 1844.

Dearest Father,
Most Honored Mr. Nettre:

In my last letter to my father, which I sent about the middle of June, I promised to write you shortly. Official duties as well as some commissions which I had to attend to for my father delayed this letter, which I am forwarding you herewith. My father wrote me that upon your return from France you expressed your surprise, and quite rightly so, that I had given no exact information up to this time concerning my definite appointment; he himself expressed his own astonishment as to why I have neglected to do this thus far. Dear father! painful as it is for me to see the eagerly longed-for union with my dear Pepi delayed, this bitter feeling is heightened to a further degree by the knowledge that because of this delay your wish to be able to go to France to your Marie must also be deferred. I can well appreciate how a man like you who has toiled so many years pines for rest, longs for quiet. But it comforts me to know that delays are not my fault. You know that when the minister called me hither the first time from Riga in 1841 he assured me that matters would be consummated by the end of that year; I worked all that year with great zeal, but received a number of official replies to the effect that matters could not be hurried. You know of the journeys which I made in the year 1842 to Vilna and the other sections inhabitated by Jews; you remember the commission which met here

last year to the first of September; and if I could count up for you all the different ministerial committees and commissions, the differing opinions which receive expression here as everywhere, you would scarcely be surprised that matters do not progress more rapidly. Now, since the beginning of this year, during which *the emperor himself has been inquiring every week* where and how the work is proceeding, it seems certain that the new Jewish legislation will be finished by the end of this year, as indeed the secretary of the ministerial committee on Jewish affairs, the counselor and secretary of state, said recently. And the truth of this remark is substantiated by the fact that several sections of this legislation have received the sanction of the supreme authority during the past months and after a revision in parliament which finishes all its affairs yearly, the whole will be sanctioned. If, therefore, I must defer against my will more exact information concerning my position till then, I can nevertheless repeat to you herewith what I communicated heretofore, viz., that a position commanding one thousand rubles salary is assured me. I believe, dear father, that nothing better can be done now than to take steps towards securing the marriage license. Hence, I will send you soon a copy of the petition which I will direct on this subject through the Bavarian Ambassador here to the ministry here. An *oral* assent of the president in Munich can not encourage me to be married, because in the first place it might rest on a misunderstanding; secondly, everyone who has a *Matrikel*[25] and a gainful

[25] This refers to the barbarous legislation which permitted only a certain number of Jewish families in such Bavarian cities and towns in which Jews were permitted to

occupation must have a *written* governmental permit. Now I have neither *Matrikel* nor occupation in Bavaria. I wrote also for this reason to my father in the enclosed letter to find out whether a *Matrikel* number is free in Munich or whether anyone is selling such. For even though rabbis and physicians can dispense with this, still this holds good only of such as officiate there, not, however, of those who are only candidates, as is the case with me in Bavaria.[26] The same holds good in reference to having a gainful occupation, without which no one can marry in Bavaria. A position in Russia is not accepted as a gainful occupation in Bavaria, for one receives protection only for Bavaria, and perhaps, if such permission is sought in Bavaria, it would be considered equivalent to giving up the position in Russia. Should one therefore marry without satisfying these legal requirements and in addition without *written* consent, wife and children would be regarded illegitimate in the eyes of the law, and since no one would consent to this latter condition, he would lose his naturalization *ipso facto,* and my naturalization which I received in 1841 would therefore cease. Further, should I be willing to lose my naturalization right, and seek another fatherland, I could not even become a Russian subject. Russia, which is closing itself more and more against the foreigner, and especially against the Jews, receives no

live. This *Matrikel,* as it was called, descended as a precious bequest from father to oldest son; such as did not possess this right either remained unmarried or married according to the Jewish law; their children, however, were considered illegitimate in the eyes of the law of the land.

[26] Lilienthal had never held a rabbinical position in Bavaria. His first post was Riga. Hence the Bavarian government considered him only a candidate for the rabbinical office.

more of the latter as subjects, even though they should be appointed as teachers in Russian schools. Again, since the promulgation of the sad ukase which orders the expulsion of the Jews from the frontier,[27] *the future of the Jews is so gloomy* that unless the Lord, in whose hands the hearts of kings are as cups of water, will have mercy, I would not become a *Russian* Jew for any price in the world. Hence, in order to retain my Bavarian fatherland, I will send a petition to the ministry through the ambassador; I will place a copy of it in your hands through my father, and I beg you urgently to take steps that the matter be expedited. May it succeed, so let us pray and hope; if it can not be accomplished there will be other means, and Pepi will be my wife before the lapse of a year. Therefore rest easy, dear father, and continue with the same love and trust as ever towards

Yours very respectfully and lovingly,

Max Lilienthal.

XI.

(*To his Fiancee*)

St. Petersburg, Dec. 8, 1844.

How can I express all that fills my heart, all the gratitude of my soul now that the hope is mine that God willing we will be married in May and I will call you my own? It is ten years since I first had the thought that some day I would call you my own. . . .

How little avails the world against love, outer life

[27] This is the infamous ukase of Nicholas I which forbade Jews to live anywhere within 50 versts of the frontier.

against our inner world! The ten years seem to me like a dream; the six years—up to May—since I have seen you, vanish like a cloud and again I stand before the little girl with the black locks, the glowing eyes and my heart whispers to me, she will be mine. . . .

From my letter to your father you will learn that I have received my appointment and with God's help I will bring you home with me in May. I will take the first steamer for Stettin; thence to Berlin, by train to Leipzig and from there to Munich. My sojourn there will be about three weeks. My service here will not permit me to remain longer unless I receive instruction from the Crown which may lengthen my stay in Germany. Meanwhile this is still very uncertain. . . .

I suggest as members of the bridal party on my side, my father, old Mrs. Rothschild and Uncle and Aunt Lichtenstein; I leave the naming of your party to your father.

MY TRAVELS IN RUSSIA.

MY TRAVELS IN RUSSIA.[1]

I.

I was but twenty-three years of age when I left for Russia. Having finished my studies at the University of Munich, and perceiving that the hope of improving the political condition of the Jews in Bavaria became daily fainter and weaker, I tried to find a suitable appointment in some foreign country. I addressed myself to my friend, Rev. Dr. Philippson, who favored me as a contributor to his paper. Upon his recommendation the office of preacher of the temple of Leipzig, and of preacher of Szegedin, in Hungary, were offered to me; but during the negotiations I received a positive call from the congregation of Riga, in Russia, to come thither as preacher and director of the newly established school.

I accepted this call at once, as Rev. I. N. Mannheimer, the renowned preacher of Vienna, had convinced me in a correspondence which I conducted with him, that something had to be done for the Russian Jews, who alone of all their coreligionists were behind the civilization of the age. The sphere of activity in such a vast empire flattered my youthful vanity, and hoping for the best results of my sincere endeavors—to raise millions of Jews to a higher standard—I asked the Russian ambassador at Munich for my passport.

Having become acquainted through literary pur-

[1] These sketches appeared originally in the columns of *The Israelite,* Cincinnati, during the years 1855-57.

suits with the counselor of the ambassador, Count Maltitz, he promised me to procure a letter of recommendation from the ambassador himself to the Minister of Public Instruction, Count Uwaroff in St. Petersburg. I obtained it, with two other letters of the Bavarian minister, Prince Wallerstein, and started with an easy heart from my sweet home for the distant friendless and foreign country.

I took the route over Madgeburg to see Dr. Philippson, to whom my traveling expenses had been sent from Riga; went to Hamburg, where I formed the personal acquaintance of the *Hacham* Dr. Bernays, the preachers Doctors Salomon and Kley, and hurried to Lübeck, where the Russian steamer, Kamtschaka, took me on board.

Several high Russian officials were of our company, and they were upon the most friendly terms with all the strangers until we passed Reval, the first Russian fortress. Then they felt themselves quite superior to us; they became cold and haughty, and the friendly intercourse ceased at once.

On Wednesday afternoon at 3 o'clock we arrived at Kronstadt, and hardly had the steamer cast anchor when a host of customs and police officers rushed to our ship. Our goods were seized, the trunks were put under seal to be examined in Petersburg, while we strangers were summoned before an officer of the police, who took our passports, saying that we would get them back in Petersburg at the Bureau for strangers.

We left the steamer, and were transferred to a small steamboat which, on the beautiful river of the Newa, brought us to the capital. This passage of an hour and a half presented to me the finest and most

majestic views I ever saw; on both sides of the river the fine imperial summer residence of Peterhof, and in the distance the gilded domes and cupolas of the Greek church, resplendent in the beaming rays of the evening sun. The nearer we came, the more palaces of real beauty and taste were revealed, till at last we had on the left side the mercantile part of the city, Wassily-Ostroff, with the magnificent Exchange, the splendid Academy of Arts, and on the right side the Quay, where many of the foreign ambassadors reside, and palaces ornamented with rich Greek columns, bordering upon each. We had to leave for the customhouse, and having slipped some silver pieces into the hands of the busy officials, we soon got all our baggage free.

I stopped at a German hotel on the Newsky-Prospect, the principal and most beautiful thoroughfare of Petersburg, and hurried the next morning to the Bavarian ambassador, Count Lerchenfeld, to deliver my letter of recommendation. He told me that he himself would introduce me to the Minister of Public Instruction, but that I had to wait six weeks till he would return from Warsaw, where he had gone on business.

This information dampened my youthful impatience a little, as I had intended to begin at once the great work of the civilization of the Russian Jews, supposing in my inexperience that the laudable undertaking depended entirely upon my exertions. Nevertheless, I intended to make the best of my unexpected leisure by forming important acquaintanceships. I built also many air castles.

But I felt hungry, and knowing that no Jews were permitted to live in Petersburg, I did not know where

to get a *Kosher* dinner. I met several converted Jews, of whom there are about forty thousand in Petersburg and Moscow; they sought my company, as they are always happy if they find a Jew to whom they may confidentially state their dissatisfaction, remorse and repentance of their apostacy; they invited me to tea, but their invitation to dinner I would not accept, and thus I began to feel very lonesome in the immense capital.

At last Mr. T. from Riga, a member of my congregation, arrived and brought me to a Jewish soldier, where I could get a *Kosher* dinner. A young man of beautiful manly appearance, six feet high, decorated with immense mustachios and the golden medal for bravery in the battle of Navarre, and his wife, an old, ugly and dirty Polish woman, presented themselves as my host and hostess. I sat down to a sumptuous dinner, which consisted of fish, soup, poultry and pie; although it was not very clean, I regaled myself after having fasted about fourteen days; I met there several soldiers, one of whom was their *Gabbai,*[2] and was invited to his room in the imperial barracks, for the next Friday night.

It was a cold Russian November night; the Newa was frozen, and could be safely crossed; and accompanied by T., I went to the fort, where the *Gabbai* was stationed.

II.

We entered through the gates of the mighty fort, passed a long line of barracks, and entered, in one of them, the room of the *Gabbai,* which was on the first

[2] Congregational officer.

floor. The room surprised me in every respect. I expected to find a poor man, who with eighteen rubles wages a year, is totally unable to incur any extraordinary expenses. But it was just the contrary; the room was brightly illuminated; silver cups for *Kiddush,*[3] and silver spoons and forks graced the table, which was covered with a clean and rich napkin; the soldier's wife wore some jewelry round her neck, and was very neatly dressed, and every article showed comfort and well-being. Certainly it must not be inferred, that this is the case with every Jewish soldier in Russia; the greater part of them are unacquainted with such luxury, but our *Gabbai's* wife (the Russian soldiers are mostly all married) was a very enterprising lady; she carried on a peddling business with some aristocratic houses, and had gathered a fortune of a few thousand rubles banco.

After having partaken of a very sumptuous supper, the *Gabbai* showed us the books of the *Kabronim* Society,[4] and its seal, on which the Hebrew letters בח"ל were engraved, which he was unable to decipher. I explained it to him as בלע המות לנצח,[5] which explanation delighted him and the other soldiers, who had assembled during our supper, to such a degree that they invited me to a soldier's wedding, which according to Talmudical usage had to take place on the following Wednesday, and that on the next Sabbath they would bring me to one of their synagogs. Before reciting grace, I had to explain to them a chapter of the *Mishnah,*[6] in which some of

[3] The Sanctification service on the Sabbath and holy days.

[4] Burial society.

[5] "He hath swallowed up death forever", Isaiah xxv, 8.

[6] The Code compiled by Rabbi Judah the Prince about 200 A. C. E.

them seemed quite well instructed. After supper a conversation began on several biblical subjects, and touching the Messiah, one in his ecstacy exclaimed that in that distant glorious time a Jew would be able to kill a whole army with his little finger. This exclamation indicated clearly enough the degree on the religious barometer of the Russian Jews.

I left quite well satisfied with my host, who by the by called on me two months ago in New York; for, having lost his wife he emigrated to America. I awaited the next Wednesday with great curiosity, and at six o'clock in the evening, two soldiers of the imperial guard called on me to accompany me to the wedding, which was to take place in the barracks of the Brebraskenki regiment. The colonel had graciously given one of the large halls for the solemn occasion, in which I found fifty to sixty soldiers of all the different regiments of the capital, in their different splendid costumes. A fine band of musicians, composed of soldiers, played some beautiful airs before the ceremony commenced. Then the music stopped; a soldier who acted as *Marshallik* (master of ceremonies) stepped forward accompanied by a soldier who played the fiddle. He began a long sermon in verses, addressing the bride, who was placed by the ladies present upon a kneading-trough, as a symbol of future plenty and abundance. The sermon admonished the bride to take leave of the beautiful days she passed as a virgin, reminded her of the holy and important duties of a good wife and inspired her with confidence in God's providential care; during the delivery of this advice (in the most corrupt Hebrew-German jargon) the young bride was melted to tears. The ladies in the meantime cut off her beauti-

ful tresses, shaved her head entirely, anointed it with some honey, wrapped it in a kind of lace bonnet, and then adorned it with the usual turban.

These preliminary ceremonies having been finished, the *Chupah*[7] was put in order, large wax-candles were lighted; the bridegroom first, and then the bride were accompanied under the canopy. The bride was led three times around the groom, while the musicians were playing another beautiful air. The usual blessings were then recited one by one, after which the bride and bridegroom, who had fasted the whole day, ate something. Supper was then served upon the beautifully decorated tables, at one of which the men took seats, at the other the ladies. The officer who was on guard came in and offered his congratulations, at which the poor groom felt himself greatly honored. Supper finished, one of the soldiers rose upon his chair and announced the different gifts presented to the poor young couple. First מצד החתן;[8] and here the good-hearted soldiers had contributed all the things necessary for such a small family establishment: chairs, a table, candlesticks, forks, knives, etc., and then מצד הכלה,[9] when the ladies presented some pieces of bed and bedding, dresses and petticoats, in order to procure some kind of a dowry for the poor soldier's bride. I felt really affected by the gentleness and charity of these Jewish soldiers, who mostly poor themselves, contributed liberally their share to the comfort of their companion, and felt more happy and more satisfied than I had seen Jews for a long time.

Grace having been recited, the dance began. The

[7] Marriage canopy.
[8] "For the groom."
[9] "For the bride."

band again played some waltzes of Strauss and some Russian melodies, and the whole company enjoyed itself in royal style till midnight. Then began the bride's dance. Before retiring to rest, the young wife for the last time is permitted to dance with all the men present, and every one heartily made use of this privilege. This dance lasted about half an hour, after which the happy couple retired, the company departed, and I started for home highly pleased with the happiness I had witnessed among my poor coreligionists.

All these scenes, for which I was totally unprepared, as I expected to see nothing but the deepest misery, excited my curiosity for the service on the next Sabbath. Early in the morning a soldier came to my house to accompany me to the synagog, which was in one of the artillery barracks. The soldier was of an extremely beautiful manly appearance, and I was astonished to see what a set of splendid men the Russian military discipline could make out of the Polish Jews. We entered a large room, decorated with a splendid *Aron Hakodesh,*[10] a large *Bimah,*[11] and a great many pews. Soldiers of the different regiments had assembled there. As soon as the service began, they took off their helmets, and put the *Talith*[12] over the head, and as the Polish Jew is not used to saying prayers without tying a girdle around his waist, they tied, instead of a girdle, their handkerchiefs round their uniform. A soldier, who officiated as *Chazan,*[13] read the prayers with intense devotion, and in general I perceived a fervent devotion,

[10] The Ark.
[11] The reading desk.
[12] The praying shawl.
[13] The Cantor.

which is seldom to be found in the other parts of Europe. The *Torah* was read with much precision; the soldiers, who had been called up, offering their liberal mite. But before the *Kedushah*[14] of *Musaph*[15] was said, they sent for their brethren who, even on the Sabbath, had to work in the artillery-forge on the lower floor. They hurried for a few minutes from their work, and with blackened faces and hands, in their workman's attire, they called the three times *Kadosh* with such fervor that I was very deeply moved when I saw how they cried to their Heavenly Father to forgive them their violation of the Sabbath. After service I was invited by the soldier into the barracks, to make *Kiddush.*[16] In each room lived three or four families, each one having a bed covered with curtains, and some furniture. The men sat down, presented brandy, and after I had recited *Kiddush,* the women hurried away and brought the *Shalit.*[17] I remained with them, they sang their *Semiroth,*[18] and one of the soldiers explained some chapters of the *Mishnah* before he said grace. After I had blessed some of their children whom they presented to me, I left highly edified and convinced that the emperor has no easy task to perform to convert these brave and religious men to the idolatry of the Greek Church.

[14] The Sanctification.

[15] The portion of the service immediately following the *Shacharit,* or morning service.

[16] The Sanctification of the Sabbath.

[17] A sort of pudding.

[18] Songs.

III.

Soon afterwards another messenger, Mr. J., of my congregation in Riga, arrived, urging me to come as soon as possible to that city, in order to enter upon my duties. As the minister had not yet returned to the capital, I followed the advice of the Bavarian ambassador not to leave the city before having made his personal acquaintance, even if I had to stay some weeks longer, as I could expect no advancement in Russia if not favored by the highest authorities. I therefore resolved to await his return.

But now began some disagreeable occurrences. I was not aware of the law that no foreign Jew whatever, if not called by the government, had a right to enter the Russian empire, and as soon as discovered, had to leave again immediately. As I was not yet installed into my office, and had no passport from the Department of Public Instruction, this law was also applicable to me.

One Saturday morning, therefore, I received a notice to appear immediately at the Bureau of Police for Strangers. I was brought before the Chief Secretary, who, although a Russian himself, spoke all the modern languages with remarkable fluency. He asked me three times if I was a Jew, for wearing neither a beard, nor the Polish *Schubetze,* and being dressed like himself, he could and would not believe that I was a Jew. But when I answered in the affirmative, he read me the above-mentioned law, and told me that I had to leave St. Petersburg immediately. I explained to him all the circumstances of my case, that I could not yet procure a Russian passport, the minister being absent, and remonstrated in every way and

form. But all was in vain until I told him that I should report the case to the Bavarian ambassador, who would procure from the general of police the permission for me to stay, till the minister would return. After some reconsideration, during which a friend of mine handed him twenty-five rubles banco, I got a card for eight days. This short time having elapsed, I was summoned again, and this time I did not get the cards for another fortnight, before the secretary of the legation went with me to the general of police, who reluctantly granted me the demanded permission.

But during this time the passport of Mr. J., from Riga, had expired. He had lived with me, but I begged him to change his lodging as soon as he had informed me of this fatal circumstance, having experienced troubles enough for myself from the amiable Russian police. The Russian Jews have no right whatever to come into Russia proper; they live either in the provinces, formerly forming the Polish kingdom, or in those which belonged to Turkey; into Russia proper and the capitals they can only come if authorized by the governor of their provinces, this authority having been confirmed by the senate (the supreme court) of St. Petersburg or the local supreme authorities.

Mr. J., therefore, had to have his passport renewed by the general of police, and although having spent some money and time, he had to wait till Saturday midnight, when the general, leaving the theatre, came again to his office in order to attend to his business. During this time he hid himself in several houses of his friends, in order not to be arrested by the police. Nevertheless, the captain of the ward was in search

of him, and thinking that he was still living with me, a soldier appeared in my room on Saturday afternoon ordering me to appear before the captain. I feared something was again amiss with me, and I begged the soldier to go, telling him that I would appear immediately. But he insisted upon accompanying me through the streets, whereat I felt mortified. It is dangerous to temporize with the Russian police, and therefore I followed to the court. There I was examined; I was asked if I knew the whereabouts of Mr. J., and answering in the negative, I was permitted to go home. Mr. J., frightened by this incident, thought himself safer nowhere than in the police department itself, and he hurried thither, passing the whole evening before he got his passport signed again.

I had hurried to my lodgings and had hardly been there a few hours when the captain himself with four soldiers entered my room, demanding that I should state the abode of Mr. J., as he was sure that I knew it. I denied this in the most positive manner, but being unable to explain myself in Russian, and he, being unacquainted with either German or French, became enraged, and threatened to arrest me, if I would not give him the information. Troubled and alarmed, I mentioned the house of a nobleman whose acquaintance I had made, where J. never had been, but where, as I supposed, the captain would receive a rather unwelcome reception for his untimely intrusion at night. Satisfied with this information he left, but I, on my part, felt sure he would return when he found out the deception. And thus it came to pass. At the aristocrat's house he was rebuked for his visit; he then hurried back to arrest me; but the bird had flown. He had to leave without attaining his pur-

pose, but for three days I had to keep my bed, so much did the miserable affair affect me. When Mr. J. reported himself the next morning to the captain with his new passport, the officer told him how I had deceived him, but knowing that I was acquainted with the Bavarian minister he let the whole affair drop. Nevertheless, I had the satisfaction to hear, one year afterwards, that he was discharged from office for some misdemeanor as an officer.

No one believes how much the poor Jews are vexed and troubled with these passports, and how much money is extorted from them by the subaltern officers. Each and every one of them, even if the permission is already granted by the chief, asks and expects something for writing the passport, for presenting it for signature, for putting the seal to it, for recording it, etc., and if the bribery is refused, the petitioner is surely brought into trouble which will cost him three times the amount. The emperor knows of the bribes; in the theatre such officers are represented in several plays, but all efforts at extirpating bribery in Russia proves totally abortive.

IV.

THE CONVERTS.

It is a beautiful, splendid and majestic capital, that city of St. Petersburg! The Isaac place, with the grand monuments of Peter I and Alexander I surrounded by the imperial residence of the winter palace, the gigantic admiralty, the Roman building of the senate and the synod, the Byzantine church of St. Isaac, the palaces of the staff and the state depart-

ment, the naval arsenal, and other beautiful buildings challenge perhaps every other place in Europe, except the Place de la Concorde in Paris. The Newski-prospect, with its very rich churches, elegant theatres, ministers' dwellings, imperial palaces, immense bazaars and rich dwellings, forms a line of striking beauty, and being the thoroughfare of the capital is continually crowded with carriages and princely equipages. The river Newa, on the east side of the city, is bordered on both sides by the splendid dwellings of the foreign ambassadors, the imperial museum, the academies for sciences and arts, and the imperial exchange; canals traversing the whole city provide for its cleanliness, and are enlivened by thousands of Russian barks. Upon all and everything is impressed the seal of Russian majesty and wealth proclaiming, "This is the imperial residence of the Russian Czars!"

And from this city the Jew is banished; in this capital no Jew has a right to live, the only capital (Madrid and Naples excepted) in civilized Europe from which the Jew has been exiled in the nineteenth century!

Under the government of the late emperor, Alexander I, the Jews were freely permitted to live in St. Petersburg, although, according to the Russian law, the Jew had a right to live only in the provinces once belonging to the kingdom of Poland, and in some few portions of southern Russia. During the invasion of Napoleon, in 1812, the Jews had rendered themselves so exceedingly useful to the imperial house of the Romanoffs, had rendered such eminent services to the Russian armies, and shown everywhere such an indubitable fidelity to the cause of Russia, that Alexander, more humane than Nicholas, could not repay

their services with ingratitude. In an ukase after the war he publicly expressed his indebtedness to them, called them "the watchful eye of the government", and even allowed them to found an agricultural colony near the capital, an opportunity of which the Jews, to their misfortune, did not avail themselves. For had they settled there, under the eye of the czar, as diligent and laborious farmers, many insinuations against their idleness would have been refuted at once, and they would have been saved a great many vexations thereafter. Nevertheless, he never troubled them while he lived, and the governor-general of the capital, Count Mileradowitsch, continually followed the example of his master. He had served in the French war with credit and won there a great many decorations, and when some Jewish merchants once presented their passports to him, asking for permission to stay in St. Petersburg, and the surrounding generals of his staff reminded him that it was against the law, he answered sternly: "Gentlemen, these men are the most faithful subjects of His Majesty. Without the assistance of these people I neither would have defeated the French nor won the decorations that adorn my breast." And he was perfectly right; for Napoleon, fully aware of this spirit of fidelity, when on his flight from Russia, had to stop in a small Jewish village. Fearing that the Jews would indicate the route he had taken to the pursuing Russians, he ordered the Jews to assemble in the synagog and to swear by the Torah that, as he was going to take the route to N—, they should not betray him to the Cossacks, who followed his tracks. The Jews swore; but Napoleon, nevertheless distrusting, took another route; and he was perfectly right in his suspicions,

for the Jews immediately gave information that he was on the way to N—. Alexander and Mileradowitsch appreciated this faithfulness, and when on the Feast of Tabernacles the chief of police complained to him about the illuminations of the *Succoth,* the general ordered that the lights had to be removed in a fortnight.

But with Nicholas' ascension to the throne this was changed at once. The principles that were to guide him in his government were autocracy, Russian nationality, and Russian Church. Intolerant towards all other denominations, except the Greek Catholic, animated by a personal disgust towards his Jewish subjects, and intending to bring them over in the largest possible numbers to his church, he immediately ordered the expulsion of the Jews from the capitals, the seaports and all the other cities renowned for their holiness and the relics of Russian martyrs. St. Petersburg, Moscow, Sebastapol, Kief and some other cities were thus the places from which the Jews were exiled. The brave and liberal Mileradowitsch had fallen on the Isaac's place in the bloody revolution that marked Nicholas' ascension to the throne, and there was none who dared speak a word in favor of the unhappy exiles.

The Polish Jews, who had sojourned in the capitals only *ad interim* left them in a body; but a large number who for many years had been regular inhabitants had established their business, were blessed with large families, and had sent their sons to the different colleges, and to them the choice was left either to fall into misery or to become Christians. The largest number did the latter, and Petersburg and Moscow number at present over forty thousand converts.

I made the acquaintance of a great many of them, and they feel inexpressible pangs and tortures of conscience. While on the one hand they try to appease their uneasiness by the fair prospect that is opened for their children by the satisfaction that they are exempt from the continual reactions and exceptional laws to which their former coreligionists are exposed, on the other hand, when in the company of Jews, they show themselves so awkward and uneasy that one can not help but pity them. They despise the heathen idolatry of the Russian Church, but do not dare, for fear of Siberia, to betray themselves by a single word. Their heart clings still with all the Jewish fervor to the holy *Shema Yisrael,* but nevertheless, they feel attracted by the wealth and luxury that surround them. They try to conceal their Jewish jargon and do not wish to be reminded of their Jewish origin, but nevertheless on the Jewish New Year's Day and Day of Atonement remorse pursues them like an evil specter, and thus their life is one of uneasiness, repentance, luxury and apprehension.

The emperor appointed some of the converted Jews to high offices in the state, in order to allure others to follow the example of their treachery; thus one of his private secretaries and counselors of state, with whom he liked best to work, was the converted Jew Posen. Another, Feigin, was the right hand of the late Minister of Finance, Count Kankrin; and in trade and business a great many acquired wealth and influence. There are but three Jewish families who as Jews and dentists were permitted to remain in St. Petersburg: two brothers Wagenheim, of whom the elder one is the dentist of the emperor, and Wallerstein, all of them holding many appointments in the

different imperial, civil and military academies; and a widow, Mrs. Brown, lives there as midwife, attached to the imperial household. Some of the converts are appointed in the different departments, but very few have attained any degree of distinction. Many, however, have become the bitterest enemies of the Jews, and thoroughly acquainted with all the ways in which the Jews make their living, with all their different religious customs and manners, they are the instigators of bitter denunciations, as a result of which the Jews are persecuted, and they shun no means by which to extort money from their former coreligionists, threatening them with denunciations if the sum required is not forthcoming. It was a sad reflection to me that some Polish Jews, when doffing the *Schubetze,* lose all commiseration for their former brethren; it seemed as if they felt some satisfaction in pushing others into the same abyss into which their treachery had dragged them. I shuddered at this sad experience, and longed for the return of the minister, in order to begin the work of reform so badly needed and so ardently desired by so many noble-minded Polish Jews.

V.

NICHOLAS I.

I was informed at the Department of Public Instruction that I had to wait eight days more before the minister, Count Uwaroff, would return. Resolved not to leave the capital before having introduced myself to my future chief, I had to try to pass the intervening time in the best way I could; and to my great satisfaction I found in the meantime an opportunity

to see the emperor surrounded by all his military splendor and grandeur.

Twice a year, during the months of May and November, Emperor Nicholas in person reviews the whole corps of the imperial guard stationed in St. Petersburg, amounting to 70,000 men, and composed of full divisions of infantry, cavalry and artillery. This guard is certainly the finest military body in the world. Each regiment is composed of 3,000 men all of whom are of one and the same size, over six feet high, the hair of one and the same color, the beard and the mustaches of one and the same fashion; and in the cavalry the horses of each regiment are of one and the same color. Some weeks before the appointed day of the parade, be the weather stormy or windy, hot or cold, they are drilled by their respective generals, and it is really astonishing with what precision these myriads move. The music bands are exceedingly large, composed sometimes of from fifty to sixty men.

The day on which the parade was appointed to take place was a Sabbath. Early in the morning the whole city was awakened by the thrilling airs which led the regiments to the immense place in the midst of the capital, on which these many soldiers had to move. I went there at nine o'clock and found the whole guard already in perfect order. The commanding generals arrived in carriages, and before they mounted their richly caparisoned horses, their attendants brushed and cleaned them again, although there was not the slightest speck of dust to be seen on them.

At eleven o'clock the cannons of the fortress began to fire a salute. While almost all the generals had arrived in closed carriages, the emperor arrived in an

open gig, drawn by only one horse, and he alighted and mounted a beautiful black stallion which seemed to be fully aware of the noble burden it bore. A numberless host of generals, led by the hereditary Grand Duke Alexander, by the emperor's brother, Michael, and the ministers and ambassadors, all glittering with gold and their breasts covered with decorations and ribbons, received the mighty man, at whose appearance a new spirit seemed to pervade these waiting legions.

According to Russian military discipline the troops have to shout their hurrah when the emperor is riding along their lines, whether they are satisfied or not; and these thundering shouts, accompanied by the music and drums of perhaps thirty different bands and the firing of cannons, has really a majestic effect. Nicholas is the best rider in his army, although the Russian cavalry are excellent riders; he is the tallest in the whole guard, for with his golden helmet he overtops the whole crowd of giants that surround him; and when, with his stern and fixed look he examines the lines that extend beyond the reach of the eye, it is truly a great and imposing spectacle.

Having passed all the lines he took a stand where the troops had to pass before him in review. The Grand Duke Michael commanded, and the regiments began to defile, led by their commanders, amongst whom were the hereditary grand duke, the emperor's son-in-law and the Duke of Leuchtenberg, Napoleon's step-grandson. Whenever a batallion passes to the satisfaction of the emperor he calls to them: "Very good, children!" and again after the rules of military discipline, they have to answer in a body: "We are happy to try our best for Your Majesty!"

The parade ended, the emperor orders that every soldier be paid a gratuity of half a ruble silver, whereafter the regiments retire into their barracks.

Thus I had seen him, the mighty man whose word, before 1852, was an all-powerful command to the whole of Europe; and really his exterior bespeaks fully the idea he represents. He is a born ruler. Anybody who never saw him and did not expect to see Nicholas would be filled with some kind of awe and reverence upon approaching him. His face is as if sculptured out of marble or cast of metal; his high forehead overshadows his large sternly fixed eyes; his firmly closed lips are cold, but show a resolute determination and an iron will; he seldom smiles, but listens attentively and answers briefly. He is always dressed in military uniform, and discipline seems to be his watchword in his personal deportment, as well as in his actions.

But Nicholas is not only a handsome but also a great man. Temperate in his habits, punctual in his manifold labors, richly rewarding those who faithfully serve his plans, and unrelentingly pursuing those who oppose or cross his views, he is animated but by the one and supreme idea, that Russia has to become the all-influential empire of the world, and the Romanoffs its mighty representatives. Encouraged by the unbroken success of twenty-five years, emboldened by the fawning flatteries of all the royal dynasties of Europe, shunning no means, if they will but assist in attaining his aims, he is accustomed to blind obedience, to divine worship.

Nevertheless he is inclined to justice; although this word is but a mockery in the Russian judiciary and executive courts, still, wherever his arm reaches,

Nicholas administers justice in the full sense of the word, if he be not misled by slander and talebearing or the blind prejudices of his fanaticism.

Nicholas, although a sworn enemy to liberty and equality, and considering himself the supreme guardian of all rights and privileges "by the grace of God," nevertheless hates serfdom, and would be happy to see it abolished in his empire. When the peasants of Livonia had begun to mutiny in 1841, and the then Secretary of the Interior, Count Stroganoff, remarked, during the session of the privy council at which the emperor presided, that this mutiny was the result of the liberty granted by Alexander to these peasants, Nicholas discharged him on the spot with the rebuke: "Thou dost not comprehend the views of my government." He has liberated and granted a kind of municipal government to the twenty millions of peasants that belong to the crown, and seeks every measure to abolish serfdom, although it seems impossible to carry out this plan.

Early in the morning he is at work at his table, where the reports of the privy-council, of the council of ministers, of the sixteen ministerial departments, and a host of other institutions await his decision. He never keeps any paper longer than forty-eight hours; after that time it is returned to the different chiefs; and this is an immense task. And he reads every paper so carefully, that he corrects the mistakes, and on every report he writes either his name, "be it so," "approved," or "rejected," in the latter case always adding in short terms his reasons; and what he writes is beautifully written, for he is an excellent penman.

In the circle of his family he is the most affectionate husband, the most tender father, but he has no heart, no compassion for his fellow creatures, and he sacrifices all and everything to the three leading principles of his government: autocracy, nationality, and supremacy of the Greek Church, for he is truly bigoted, and on account of his bigotry he pursues his Jewish, Catholic, Protestant and other subjects, invents and tries all means to entrap them and to lead them to apostacy; and the whole western part of the empire is full of subjects who groan under the horrible yoke of hierarchical fanaticism.

Nicholas has reached the climax of prosperity. Well, the awful hour of the bloody trial has come; let us see if he will be able to restrain it.

VI.

THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION; RUSSIAN OFFICIALS.

At last, to my entire satisfaction, I was informed that the Minister of Public Instruction, Mr. Sergei Semenowitch Uwaroff, had returned from Warsaw. In Russia everyone is bound to remember all these first names; for as soon as anyone gets well acquainted with someone he does not call him by his family name, but by his own first name and that of his father, by which is added the syllable "witch," which means son; Sergei Semenowitch thus means Sergei, son of Semen. The present emperor is called Nicolai Paulowitch (son of Paul); the hereditary crown prince is called Caesarowitch (son of the Caesar), and thus everyone who is not of a

higher rank is called in conversation by these two names. I, though a foreigner, had to give my father's name, Leb, and was therefore usually called Maxim Lebowitch.

Informed of the minister's return, I hastened to the palace of the Bavarian ambassador, who had promised to introduce me to my future chief, upon whose favor the success of my career in Russia was to depend. I had been taught that there are three requisites in that northern icy country that are essential conditions to future success, either a recommendation, a lady, or bribery with money. To be recommended by an ambassador was as favorable a circumstance as I could expect, and I did not delay making use of it. But what a disappointment when I found the ambassador's palace closed, and heard that he had been removed to Berlin! I considered this a very bad omen for the beginning, but did not lose courage. I hurried to his *chargé d' affaires,* Count Fahrenheim, who received me very kindly and wrote for me immediately an official letter of recommendation. Provided with this letter and another one from the Russian embassy of Munich, I anxiously awaited Friday, the minister's usual reception day.

I felt no little uneasiness when my carriage stopped at the minister's palace. The palace of the department is surrounded by and in the neighborhood of magnificent buildings. On the north side is the splendid Alexandrowski Theatre, in which only Russian actors are permitted to play. It is an immense building, decorated on both sides with Greek columns, ornamented with bronze and marble statues, and the temple of the muses, in which the excellent Russian actors, Karatikin and his lady, gathered their laurels

and a fortune of one million francs. On the other side is the palace of the Secretary of the Interior, resplendent with marbles, Greek columns, statuaries, and an immense number of apartments. Opposite to it stands another palace, the school of the Russian theatres, in which the young aspirants, dedicating themselves to the service of the different muses, are trained for their future career. These two palaces occupy a whole street. Then comes the palace of the Department of Public Instruction. It is built in a half-circle, and divided by three immense porticos. The right wing is the dwelling of the minister, consisting of a hundred and twenty apartments, furnished at the expense of the imperial treasury, and representing in every manner the wealth and might of Russian majesty, and on the left wing is the department in which about one hundred officials are employed. It is divided into seven spacious rooms, according to the seven districts, into which the empire is divided, for the purposes of public instruction. The director of the department occupies a very large room for himself, in front of which is an immense salon for the meetings of the department, decorated with the life-size portrait of the emperor in full imperial dress, surrounded by the portraits of eminent Russian scholars and the presidents of the imperial academy of sciences, one of whom was the lady, Countess Dashkoff, the far-famed favorite of the Empress Catherine. Each district in the department is presided over by a chief clerk, and in his room are as many green tables, with a sufficient number of officials, as different states under his direction. The greatest order, the strictest discipline, the utmost tranquility reign

throughout the department. The employees come at ten and leave at three o'clock. Two *portiers* open the door, take off the coat or cloak of every official, and brush the dust off of everyone before he ascends the marble stairs to enter his room. With the utmost courtesy each one greets the other, and when the chief clerk is entering the room all have to rise and stand till he has taken his seat. All the employees belong to one of the different sixteen degrees into which the officers are divided, and by virtue of which they belong to the nobility and can obtain rank, influence, wealth and decorations. There were born princes of the highest aristocracy of Russia, having but the lower degrees of the service nobility, while other men had the high rank of counselors of state.

All the officials wear uniform. In the military department the military uniform is worn; in the civil departments they have their richly and differently embroidered dress-coats for public reception days; on ordinary days each department is distinguished by different colors and buttons—the department of public instruction by blue coats and trousers with yellow buttons, the department of the interior by green coats with gilt buttons, the department of the foreign affairs by blue coats with white buttons. This system of uniform is carried so far that even the scholars of the colleges (gymnasium) wear blue coats with red collars and yellow buttons, and the students of the universities different coats according to the different faculties, a cocked hat and a sword. Thus the immense corps of Russian officials is strictly divided into castes, ruled by military discipline, and distinguished everywhere by their uni-

forms, easily managed and superintended. Nevertheless, there is no secret in the management of the departmental affairs which is not betrayed to interested parties for money; and there is no officer who can not be bought in one way or another. The emperor is fully aware of this, but can not help it, and I heard of some tricks that are too good not to be told.

Two noblemen had a lawsuit for an immense amount of money before the Senate, the Russian Supreme Court of Justice. The party who, in any equitable court, had every prospect to gain the case accidentally arrived first in St. Petersburg, applied to the chief clerk of the Senate, who had to report in this case, and offered him a proportionate bribe if he would but carry out the demands of justice in deciding the case in his favor. The chief clerk accepted it, promising his full aid and assistance; and it must be said to the credit of Russian officials that, if they have taken bribery from one party, they never can be bought by the other. Shortly afterward the defendant arrived in the capital; applying to the same chief clerk, he soon learned that he had been bought already by his antagonist. In order to attain his aim, he was obliged to resort to another trick. He called upon the chief clerk and asked how much he would have to pay to be allowed to examine all the original documents which the plaintiff had submitted; they agreed upon the price of 25,000 rubles. Upon further inquiry as to what evening the clerk would bring the papers to the defendant's house, where he would receive the stipulated sum and an elegant champagne supper, the clerk answered that he could not come before

eight days. The time was then agreed upon, and on a stormy winter night the clerk appeared in the defendant's house with an immense load of papers and documents. He found the gentleman sitting at a bright burning fire, was received with the utmost courtesy, and after having freely participated of excellent champagne, the conversation turned to business. The clerk handed over the papers he had brought with him, while at the same time a bundle of bills was handed to him. While he was eagerly counting the money the defendant took the documents and threw them in the fire, and before the clerk could rise to save them they were enveloped in flames. The bitterest altercation ensued; but all to no avail, as the fire rapidly consumed the costly fuel. The defendant dismissed the clerk, exclaiming angrily that now he would settle the whole business according to his views. On the next morning, therefore, he appeared in the Senate, made a complaint against the clerk before one of the Procurators (Supreme Judges) that his suit never comes to trial, the papers being detained intentionally by the clerk; he therefore begged to send for the clerk and the documents. But what was his astonishment when the clerk appeared, bringing all the papers which the defendant supposed he had burnt the night before. The clerk, fully anticipating a trick, during the eight days of delay had caused copies to be made of all the papers wanted; the defendant then had paid 25,000 rubles for copies only, and as he had drawn the attention of the Supreme Judge to the final decision of his lawsuit, in a fortnight it was decided against him.

Again, the present Secretary of the Interior, Mr. Perowski, a man of great activity and undoubted

honesty, complained to the emperor several times of the venality of the Russian police in the capital. The emperor, wearied of these continual complaints, wanted a decided proof. The minister promised it in twenty-four hours. Having returned to his palace, he immediately sent for the general of the police, ordering him to send a captain upon whose integrity he could rely fully, as he wanted him for an important errand. One of the captains soon appeared before the minister. This one told him that he had been informed of the existence of a gambling house on the Sennoy (Haymarket), naming the number; he ordered him to surround it during the night, arrest all the gamblers, and report the next morning. The captain, with an adequate force, surrounded the house and detected the guilty parties in the midst of their gambling. The greatest confusion ensued, but there was no escape; cards, money, etc., were confiscated and the parties declared under arrest. After the first consternation had subsided, the gamblers requested the captain to take some wine with them before he took them away. He did so, and after half an hour's conversation they took him aside and offered him an amount of money if he would let them go. He sternly refused, but they offered larger sums, stating that he would only disgrace men of standing in the community without any profit to himself, and that he should rather pocket the offered bribe. Money is dangerous and seducing, and at last our captain consented to the offer. On the next morning he reported in person to the minister that he had found no gambling house whatever. But what was his surprise, when the door of the minister's room opened; the gamblers

one by one came out of it and testified to the contrary, all of them having been appointed by the minister's private police to prove the captain's venality. The poor fellow had to go to Siberia, to reflect there on the minister's ingenuity.

Again, the same minister had been informed that a gambler, who played with marked cards, committed great mischief in the capital. He ordered one of the captains of police to search his house, and in case he would find the *corpus delicti* to arrest the gambler. The captain detected the cards behind a looking-glass; the culprit threw himself at his feet, begging to give the officer whatever he had won by his criminal gambling if he would let him go. He handed him a Russian government paper of a few thousand dollars; the captain accepted it, burnt the cards and left the house. On the next morning the gambler made complaint before the minister against the captain that he had searched his house, had found nothing, but that he himself was missing a government paper of so many thousand dollars, that he suspected the captain to have robbed him of it, and that he begged leave to search the captain's premises. This was done, the paper was found, and that poor fellow, too, had to go to Siberia.

Thus continually one rogue outwits the other, but notwithstanding all sort of experiences, the proper inscription upon the Russian departments of justice and administration should be: *"Temples of Bribery."*

VII.

THE INTERVIEW WITH THE MINISTER.

It was Friday morning at eleven o'clock when my sleigh stopped at the minister's palace. I felt very uneasy when ascending the marble stairs, in the anticipation of meeting such an influential Russian grandee. At the hands of the Russian officials, with whom I had to deal till then, I had encountered such disagreeable treatment that I did not know what to expect from this interview so ardently desired. As soon as I had alighted, two porters opened the large glass door; one of them took my cloak, the other showed me into the salon. In the first antechamber I found a host of couriers, ready at a moment's notice to carry the minister's dispatch on horseback to the different departments of the capital. One of them opened the door into the large reception room, decorated with the minister's library, different pictures and maps. A clerk is there continually in attendance to announce to the minister those who wish to see him; he asked me in the Russian language what I wanted, but totally unacquainted with that northern vernacular, I did not understand him. I answered in French, which was unintelligible to him; but on my handing him the letter of introduction from the Bavarian Embassy, he courteously took it from me and disappeared into the minister's apartment.

There, then, I stood alone in that mighty hall at the threshold of my future career. My fate depended on the impression I should make upon my future chief; of that I was fully aware. I knew very well that this hour would decide my lot for a great many

years; but totally unacquainted with diplomatic conversation, and having never had any intercourse with such high-bred aristocracy, I felt exceedingly uneasy; my heart beat loudly, and I put my whole trust in the God of Israel and the good and holy cause to which I had dedicated my best energies.

I had waited scarcely ten minutes, when the director of the minister's private office came out to me, and informed me in French that the minister would receive me immediately. The door of the salon was opened, and I stood in the presence of Minister Uwaroff. I felt at once easy and contented, and all my anxiety had disappeared. Instead of a Russian bear, whom I had expected to meet, I found a thorough gentleman, whose highly intellectual features made the most favorable impression on me. Uwaroff is a man of middle size, lean and thin; but his high forehead, sharp eyes, aquiline nose, and fine mouth, showing at once the philosopher, the shrewd statesman, and kind-hearted disposition, win for him at once the heart of everyone who comes in contact with him. His aristocratic bearing is refined and polished by his thorough education; he speaks the modern languages as fluently as his native tongue, and having published several works on Goethe, on education, etc., in the French language, Alexandre Dumas, the celebrated French author, gave the verdict that no Frenchman could have used better language. He is distinguished as a scholar in the classics, and at a dinner given to him by the University of Dorpat, he was the only one among the professors that was able to give a toast and to converse fluently in the Greek language. Notwithstanding his high learning, he is one of the shrewdest

Russian diplomats; and I may say of him that by his erudition he is a European, by his station a Rsusian. He wore a rich morning gown, and while I bowed to him he had come up to me, shook hands with me, and addressed me in German, saying: "I am very happy to see you, doctor, in St. Petersburg; your minister recommends you highly, and you have arrived at the proper moment. The emperor has just established a committee of the ministers to take the present condition of the Jews in Russia into consideration. I was in want of such men as you, and your services, I hope, will be as useful to your brethren as welcome to the government." Thanking him for this kind reception, I handed him the letter of recommendation from the Russian Embassy at Munich. He read it attentively and then turning to me, said: "Count Severin confirms the letter of your minister, and I have no doubt you will make your fortune in Russia." After having inquired concerning my birthplace, the university where I had finished my studies, the faculty in which I had graduated, and having perused the testimonials I presented to him, he continued: "Well, doctor, you must call tomorrow evening, when I will state to you my ideas about the reform of Jewish education, and hear your opinion; you must tarry some time in St. Petersburg before you enter on your office in Riga; your time shall not be lost, and I will assist you in making the best of it. Wait a moment, and I will write you a letter of recommendation to the Minister of the Interior, which you will hand him immediately, and he will be pleased to know you."

While he was sitting down to write the letter, I looked about me in his gorgeous salon. The walls

were covered with red silk, richly embroidered and decorated with a host of masterly paintings. On the south side was an immense French chimney with a brisk wood fire (to which the minister was fond of attending himself) and ornamented with an immense looking-glass and all kinds of costly French fancywork; in the midst of the room stood the large official green table, the imperial Russian color, and all kinds of comfortable sofas and chairs around it; the minister sat in an office chair, and I had another one offered to me. How plain the government offices in Germany look in comparison with these salons! It is the might and wealth of Russia that is represented in every government office in the capital.

The minister had sealed the letter, handed it to me, and said: "Doctor, take it immediately to Count Stroganoff, and be sure to come tomorrow evening, for we must become better acquainted."

I left and was so much surprised at this reception and so much gratified with its result that, in the gratitude of my heart, I recited all the psalms I knew by heart. My sleigh stopped round the corner of the next square, and showing the minister's letter, I was ushered immediately into the presence of Count Stroganoff. I did not feel as uneasy as before, and stepped courageously into the salon. The count, dismissed from his high office two years afterwards, was quite a different man from Uwaroff. He was less of a statesman than a general, and I was really surprised to see a Secretary of the Interior in military uniform, with the large epaulets of a general. I could not understand how a general could administer the civil interests of the empire,

but most of the ministers are military men; even the president of the highest imperial ecclesiastical court, the Synod, Count Pratasoff, is a general of the Hussars; but Russia is ruled more after military discipline than principles of justice, and thus this difference between Europe and Russia is easily explained. The count was a man in the prime of life, tall size, and of frank, open manners. "I am glad to see you," he addressed me in French; "something ought and must be done for the regeneration of your brethren; you are a stranger here, and do not know the mode of life of your coreligionists; try your best to cooperate with the imperial government, and your services will be gratefully acknowledged. But do not think the task an easy one. You will have to overcome great difficulties, but trust in the good cause, and whenever you need my advice you may call without ceremony." He then put some other questions to me, and saying that he would send me a few questions to which I might send him an answer from Riga, he dismissed me, and I returned happy as a king to my residence. The Jews, who anxiously awaited my return, congratulated me on the success of this first interview, and gave me during the Sabbath all manner of advices and opinions to lay before Minister Uwaroff on Saturday night.

On that evening I arrived punctually at his palace, and was admitted immediately. After being seated, the minister addressed me thus: "It is but a short time since the emperor has established a committee to take the present condition of the Jews into consideration. Count Risseloff, the Minister of the Imperial Domains, is appointed president of it. We are really at a loss, doctor, how to begin this im-

mense task of reforming this highly gifted people. They are opposed to all and every European civilization. They move in their own sphere, careless about everything that is going on about and around them, and till now no means have succeeded in stirring them from their lethargy. The emperor has granted them several rights and privileges; in the ukase dated April 13, 1837, an exemption from military service was granted those who would apply themselves to classical studies, or become farmers; but all in vain. Our schools are open to them, but they do not visit them; they spend all their time in their trades and the study of their Talmud. The emperor is tired of these resultless trials. He wishes something substantial to be done quickly, and if the Jews will let this occasion pass without showing their desire to carry out the emperor's intention, I fear bad, very bad, times will be in store for them, while the brightest future is awaiting them if they seize this opportunity of amalgamating themselves with European civilization. I am a friend of your people; believe me, if we had such Jews as I met in the different capitals of Germany, we would treat them with the utmost distinction, but our Jews are entirely different from those in other countries. I wish to hear your views, and if practicable, I shall communicate them to the committee of ministers."

I replied: "Being a foreigner, totally unacquainted with the intentions of the Russian government as well as with the intellectual, moral and political condition of the Russian Jews, it would be wrong on my part either to give advice or to express a decided opinion. Nevertheless, I would venture to give my ideas respecting three points: First, Jewish educa-

tion must become less exclusively Talmudic; as long as they devote the best years of their children to the study of Hebrew books only, without teaching them either the native tongue of their country or the elementary branches of secular education, they will always remain aloof without participating in the common civilization. But under present circumstances they could not possibly visit the public and higher schools as they do not understand sufficiently well the Russian language in which the different subjects are taught, and they are full of mistrust lest by becoming acquainted with another mode of life their children might become estranged from their religion. It seems, therefore, absolutely necessary to establish Jewish schools for themselves, in order that they themselves may superintend the religious instruction, and the government may have the guarantee that the children will be taught in the different branches necessary for their future civil and political development."

"In this respect I coincide with you fully," interrupted the minister, "and I will direct you to draw up a plan for different higher and lower schools. But what next?"

"Their aversion to becoming farmers," I continued, "is quite natural. It is the consequence of all the medieval persecutions during which bloody period the hunted Jew was bound to acquire such property, as he could carry along with himself, when the despotic will of any avaricious sovereign banished him from the country in order to confiscate his property. Besides, since in almost all the European countries the Jew was forbidden by law to acquire real estate, how should he be used to till and plough it? And this condition, which has obtained during fif-

teen or eighteen centuries, can not be overcome at once. But let the emperor encourage them, let ways and means be devised earnestly how to make them good farmers, and there is no doubt that the gifted Jews will soon become fond of and acquainted with agriculture."

"The committee," answered the minister, "is earnestly discussing this important subject, and is determined to carry out some plan. But we have failed already so many times that I doubt whether we will succeed without applying extraordinary means."

"Every obstacle," I eagerly replied, "will be overcome readily if His Majesty will grant the Jews at once full and complete emancipation. This is the only solution of the riddle that puzzles so many eminent statesmen. France, in the time of the revolution, without any restriction or condition whatever, granted the Jews each and every right of French citizenship, and the Jews, though in Alsace they are very backward, have become entirely amalgamated; they are French citizens to the bone, occupy high and glorious stations not only in the civil and military service, but even as members of the highest scientific institutions. But in Germany, where the emancipation of the Jews is promised and never granted, where one part of the government plays the liberal, while the Diet assumes the part of the intolerant or *vice versa,* the government raises only dissatisfied citizens. The Jews in Prussia, for instance, are as well prepared for emancipation and are as fully entitled to its enjoyment as any portion of the Christian community. There is no reproach whatever to be made to the Jews, but now the government assumes the title of a 'Christian State,' and

all the exertions made by the Jews have proved abortive and discouraged a great many parents from sending their children to universities, this being the sure path towards future apostacy. Let the emperor at once proclaim the emancipation of the Jews, and let him then issue any ukase whatever to begin the work of Jewish reform in earnest, to cut short the exclusive study of the Talmud, and although totally unacquainted with the character of the Russian Jews, I dare to avouch that in ten years hence they will surpass the most sanguine expectations of the imperial government. The emperor is not thwarted by the tedious consultations of a parliament—his will is law—let him set a magnanimous and liberal example to Europe and he will be applauded by all good men and be called the benefactor of our race. He is autocrat, why should or could he not do it?"

The minister had listened attentively, surprised and pleased with my enthusiasm, but answered: "It is true; the emperor is autocrat, but even the emperor can not do as he pleases; every man's actions are circumscribed by circumstances. But, doctor, your enthusiasm is of no avail. The Jews must take the initiative; they must try to win the favor of the emperor—then their hopes and wishes in this country of absolute government may be accomplished quicker than in any other country."

I sighed, and kept silent. I understood that the old game was to be played here, too. I was aware that it required all the energy, perseverance, ability and suppleness of the Jewish character to attain the desired end, besides having to overcome the aversion and reluctance of the Jews themselves.

But the minister interrupted my silent meditation

and continued: "I consider it best that you set your ideas down in writing. I shall order the Counselor Duksta-Dykshinski to translate it into Russian. Call on him next Monday—he is in the department on the other side of my palace. He speaks French and German fluently, and will assist you in anything you may want. When you have finished, call again—I shall always be ready to receive you."

With these kind words he dismissed me, and I hurried home. I felt exceedingly uneasy and discontented. I knew that the Jews had not yet reached that high mark of civilization to make the refusal of complete emancipation a warranted reproach to the government. I perceived, on the other hand, that the Russian Jew in general was not below the degree of civilization which the Russian people occupy, but was even above it, and saw there was reason enough to justify the mistrust of my coreligionists. But "might is above right," and I knew that I had to prepare myself for a hard struggle.

VIII.

According to the order of the minister I called on Monday forenoon at the Department of Public Instruction, on Counselor Duksta-Dykshinski. He was the chief clerk for the affairs of the kingdom of Poland, for those of the Jews, and an efficient member of the imperial committee of censors; he had attained the degree of State Counselor, was decorated with several crosses, and wore the golden medal of fifteen years of faithful service. A Russian functionary, whether clerical, military or civil, is always to be regarded under all these different views if

properly understood. Every functionary not a nobleman by birth in the sense of the word as used in Western Europe, attains by appointment to office a degree of official nobility. These degrees are divided in the different branches of the imperial service into sixteen classes; they are called in the Russian language *Tschin,* and if moving in this official atmosphere you continually hear of nothing but *Tschin.* Every degree is distinguished by a special title, as Well-Born, High Well-Born, Excellency, High Excellency, etc. And every officer against whom no complaint had been brought in the course of three years is entitled, as a matter of course, either to a higher degree or to a monetary reward, or to one of the imperial orders. The Russian empire has seven of these orders; the order of Stanislaus, Wladimir, White Eagle, Alexander Nefski, Andrew, St. George and St. Catherine, and it is a matter of the highest ambition with the Russian officials to obtain as many of them as possible. When, before the decisive battle of Austerlitz, Napoleon was visited by a body of Russian generals sent to him by the Emperor Alexander, he remarked that they looked like the starry heaven. And when in the year 1844 a controversy about astronomy arose one evening in the circle of the imperial family, and nobody being there amongst all the *aides-de-camp* to decide the disputed question, the emperor, by the advice of his brother, the Grand Duke Michael, sent for the celebrated astronomer Struve, the president of the observatory. The eminent scholar soon appeared, explained the subject to the satisfaction of his imperial master, and was invited to pass the evening in the circle of the family. As long as he had to speak on any scientific subject,

he was quite alive, talkative and sociable, but as soon as these matters were dropped and the conversation turned to other subjects, Mr. Struve became silent, awkward and uneasy. The emperor, observing this strange behavior, remarked to his brother: "These scholars are quite a curious and extraordinary kind of beings; when out of their proper atmosphere they do not know how to move." "Mr. Struve," replied the grand duke, "is quite excusable; the astronomer, observing on the breast of your generals so many stars in the improper place, is quite puzzled in his combinations, and can not find his way through this reversed starry heaven." This mania for decorations pervades all the official classes, and astonishes the stranger who, arriving from Germany, is not used to such vain and void ostentation. I still recollect very well how shocked I was when, being on the sick-bed, the physician entered my room decorated with two immense stars. Duysta-Dykshinski had attained the degree of state, had several crosses in his button-hole, wore some round his neck, although he was one of those few officers who did not like to parade these marks of distinction except on court days.

As stated, he was also a member of the committee of censors. This committee is one of the most important safeguards of Russian autocracy and despotism; and Nicholas, when appointing its president, applied to none other for advice as to whom he should choose for this responsible position except to his field marshal Paskewitch. The marshal, used to repressing every free thought and every free movement in rebellious Poland, recommended the right kind of man, and with an iron grasp he sways the scepter of his censorship. The members of the com-

mittee read all the books imported by booksellers from foreign countries, and decide whether the circulation shall be permitted or refused. If they perform their duties faithfully for ten years, their salary is doubled; half of this is bestowed on them as a life annuity, inducement sufficient not to be liberal in exercising power. It is rather curious sometimes to take a foreign paper in hand and to find half of the contents taken off by some chemical process; this proceeding, however, being preferable by far to that of Germany, where they confiscate either the whole paper or cut off whole leaves. This committee has the superintendence over the censors appointed throughout the whole empire. Duksta-Dykshinski, a man of some forty years of age, received me very kindly. Speaking French and German very fluently, our conversation proceeded very smoothly, and at the close of it he admonished me not to be too self-confident. "You are still very young," he added, "unacquainted with the sly and slippery ways of the art of government. Be on the lookout that you be not entrapped." He invited me for the afternoon to his house in order to introduce me to his family and become better acquainted with me.

I went there in the afternoon at five o'clock and found the nicest family I ever met with. The lady spoke the Russian, Polish, German and French languages, and was accomplished in every way and respect, a tender wife, an affectionate mother, an excellent housekeeper and a fine lady. The children, eight in number, surpassed one another in obedience to their parents, in mutual affection and in general deportment. The counselor, perceiving my astonishment, remarked, "Yes, doctor, I think I am one of

those happy men who have no trouble at all with their children. And do you know how I accomplished this exemplary education of my children? I followed but two rules: the first was that the strictest attention was paid to the education of my oldest child, and having succeeded in the education of my oldest daughter, she, as a matter of course, assisted me in training the others by setting them a good example; and secondly, as soon as one of my children begins to show his own will, it will and must be taught obedience. Thus you will never hear quarreling or grumbling in my family; no corporal punishment is made use of; love and affection directs the intercourse of us all." The older children also spoke the four above-named languages, and without being disturbed by my presence continued their studies. The Russians—I mean the higher and better classes in general—spend a great deal of money and attention on the education of the rising generation, and are encouraged and supported therein by the government. In the palaces of the higher nobility you will find French, English and German tutors; and a teacher who stays for fifteen years in one and the same family, finishing the education of the young counts and princes, attains a certain degree of Russian nobility and is decorated with the Order of Stanislaus. It is therefore generally acknowledged in western Europe that the *ton* in the Russian noble families is an accomplished one, fashionable and instructive.

The counselor, by order of the minister, requested me once more to hand him either in German or French my ideas on the regeneration of the Jews in Russia, as he was ordered to translate them into the

Russian language. I did so in the course of the week, and the papers having been translated, I was summoned to appear on Thursday evening at 7 o'clock in the minister's apartment. I was there at the appointed time, but had to wait, as the minister was still enjoying his siesta. He was used to receiving official visitors from eleven to three o'clock, except on Monday, when the Supreme Privy Council met, and on Tuesday, when the meeting of the different ministers took place; after three o'clock he took a walk, at four was dinnertime; after dinner he took a nap and was not back in his office before seven. After having waited a quarter of an hour, I was ushered into his presence, when he expressed himself as satisfied with the contents of my memorandum. But while examining the different paragraphs, a general, without having been announced by the secretary in waiting, rushed into the salon, threw his hat with the greatest *nonchalance* upon the minister's table and both embraced and kissed each other with the greatest cordiality, and then began a lively conversation in French. Knowing the minister to be a man of strict etiquette, I was anxious to know who the man was who had entered the salon so unceremoniously and had behaved there so unconstrainedly. The minister soon satisfied my curiosity by introducing me to the general, who was no less a personage than Count Pratasoff, the president of the Imperial Synod. "Count," said he, "I take the pleasure in introducing you to Mr. Lilienthal, Doctor of Philosophy and Physiology, who goes to Riga as director of the newly established school of the Jewish congregation." "Is the gentleman a Jew?" asked the count. "A Jew and a rabbi besides," answered the minister. "I hope he will be of great use

to us, being highly recommended by our ambassador in Munich." The count measured me with his eyes from head to foot, having perhaps never seen a Jew who had finished his course at a university. "Are you also acquainted with Christian theology?" he said to me. "Yes, Your Excellency," I replied; "the Jews have not yet started a Jewish university for themselves; Jewish theologians are bound by law to visit the Christian faculties of divinity, but this inconvenience proves of great advantage to us, as we are obliged to exercise our own judgment and to select from the different lectures and subjects only those that suit our faith and our theological system." "Then you are not a converted Jew?" he asked me. I smiled at that question and answered boldly: "I feel myself as sound a Jew as the strictest in the whole empire." The minister, perceiving that the conversation would take a disagreeable turn, interrupted us by saying: "Doctor, I wish you would start next week for your place of destination. Call on Saturday night about the same time as today and I shall give you then the necessary instructions." I left the room, and in riding home the awkward questions of the supreme missionary of Russia quite troubled my mind and my feelings.

IX.

Having heard of the minister's intention to despatch me in the course of the next week to Riga, the place of my destination, I had to make the necessary arrangements for obtaining the permission of the police to leave Petersburg.

I therefore sent my passport on Friday morning to the Captain of the Ward, informing him of my de-

parture and requesting his signature. This business in both the capitals of the Russian Empire is transacted by the porters of the house. They have to inform the police of their wards of the strangers who move into or remove from the house. They report everything that is going on in the house, thus forming an important link in the police system. If it should happen that anyone is not provided with the necessary passports, or that the obtaining of these papers is delayed for one cause or another, these uneducated fellows are the most troublesome and most annoying creatures in the world. They will call any number of times during the day declaring that they will report you to the police, and only by bribing them with some brandy will they grant you the demanded delay. They are called in the Russian language *Dvornik* (doorkeeper). I sent for mine, handed him my paper and got it back without any trouble, signed and sealed by the captain, in the course of an hour. With that document I hastened to the Bureau for Foreigners, where I was ordered to come back on Tuesday next, as in the meantime my name would be published three times in the Russian and German newspaper of the metropolis. This has to be done under the pretense that the creditors may be informed of the departure of their financial friend. The true reason, however, is that the secret police, the so-called *gendarmerie,* may be thoroughly informed of the movement of every individual and may call the attention of the officers of the place to which anyone is starting to the same individual, thus spreading a net over the whole empire and having an all-watching eye and control over natives as well as foreigners. But even this limited freedom of traveling has since been forcibly re-

strained, as the natives can not leave their country except by special permission of the government even for special purposes, as, for instance, recruiting their health in a watering place or for some commercial enterprise, besides paying for the semiannual passport of each individual one hundred rubles silver.

In the meantime I tried to see some of the ministers in behalf of my future congregation in Riga, which had an important lawsuit with the common council of that city, to which I shall recur hereafter. I had been requested by the board of trustees to call on some of the magnates of the empire in whose hands the decision rested, to represent to them the true state of the case, and to induce them to give their vote in favor of the just cause of the Jews. I found no difficulty in obtaining again an audience with the Secretary of the Interior, Count Stroganoff, who, with his usual candor, at once stated to me that the legal investigation in the business had not advanced so far as to be reported to the Council of Ministers; that he could give me no decisive promise, but that I might rest assured that the mighty power of the city of Riga should exercise no influence whatever, and that the case would be decided according to the strictest impartiality.

I then hurried, accompanied by one of the Jewish deputies of Riga, to the Secretary of Poland, Minister Turkul. The kingdom of Poland, after the Revolution of 1831, although having lost its constitution and its independence, and although its entire annexation to the Russian empire was steadily and perseveringly prepared, in the year 1839 was yet governed separately from Russia. It had no longer its separate custom houses and revenues; but some privileges had not yet

been entirely abolished, and one of them was that in St. Petersburg there existed a peculiar and distinct department for the kingdom of Poland, whose chief was the above-mentioned Minister Turkul.

The sad fact is apparent to even the most casual observer that the Poles themselves, who are in the imperial service by the thousands and occupy some of the highest and most responsible positions exert all their abilities and their best efforts to ruin their native country. While in western Europe everyone pities them for the loss of their independence and nationality, while everyone admires their heroic deeds in their last struggle, and the old Polish song, "Still Poland is not lost," has become one of the favorites of England the impartial observer needs must acknowledge that in Russia they willingly contribute the largest share by proposing all kinds of plans and suggestions to annihilate Poland, to destroy every possibility of its future resurrection, and to prove on every occasion their readiness to submit to the will of the autocratic czar. If you ask them, "How have they become so degenerate?" they will coolly answer, "There is no hope any more for our country; we have to support our families; we are richly paid for our services; we are highly rewarded for our faithfulness, and after all, we think that Poland fares better by sharing the glory of world-conquering Russia, than by being divided and torn to pieces by its ambitious magnates."

The Minister Turkul, one of Nicholas' favorites, was then a man in the prime of life, some forty years old. He is highly talented, well educated, and speaks the modern languages with the utmost fluency. He had risen to the ministerial chair with extraordinary rapidity. He had been appointed chief clerk in the

department, and was well posted in all its affairs. The minister, Count L——, once being absent on leave, Emperor Nicholas visited the department, began a conversation with Turkul, and found him a man of such eminent talents that shortly afterwards the minister was removed and Turkul appointed in his place.

He received us very kindly, as the Russian grandees usually do, and having listened to our request, he promised us his assistance as soon as the documents would be presented to the committee of ministers. Having been informed of my arrival by Count Uwaroff, he conducted quite a lively conversation with me on the subject of the Jews in general, the reforms introduced in the temple of Warsaw, the preacher, Reverend Dr. Goldsmith, and spoke at great length of the theological seminary of that city under the superintendency of Director Eichenbaum. I remarked to him that it was rather strange that all the pupils of that seminary became teachers or merchants, while not one of them occupied the rabbinical chair. "The *Collegium Rabbinicum* in Padua," I added, "boasts of a number of rabbis, all pupils of that excellent institution, each one surpassing the other in learning, piety, and scholarship." "I do not know how it comes," answered the minister, "but I hope that when the office of the rabbis will be put in a favorable light by the authority of the government, our pupils too will not change their profession." He then requested me in case I should come to Warsaw to visit the Jewish schools and to state to him my opinion frankly. And wishing me every success in my new career, he dismissed me in the most friendly manner.

On Saturday night, as ordered, I called on Minister Uwaroff to take leave of him. He handed me a letter

of recommendation to Mr. Napierski, the director of the state of Livonia and my future chief; exhorted me to do all in my power to raise the young school to a degree of perfection, admonished me not to be discouraged by difficulties, as the government was ready to support me in any emergency, assured me that the department would gratefully acknowledge and richly reward my services, and accompanying me to the door of the salon he embraced me and kissed me on both cheeks. I was so overcome by this extraordinary mark of affection that I could utter scarcely a word, and the minister perceiving with satisfaction the impression his amiability and gentleness had made upon me, called me back once more to his official table, put down on a paper some remarks, ordering me at the same time to write him my opinions about it, and kissing me once more he shook hands heartily with me and dismissed me.

When I was out of the ministerial palace and was hurrying home I did not know what to think of these kisses of the minister. I supposed I must have won the favor of the count and he must have become attached to me in an extraordinary manner, because I had never heard in Germany that the chief deigns to kiss his inferiors. Happy in these thoughts and feeling like a king I related to my Jewish acquaintances at home what extraordinary favor had been bestowed upon me. But they laughed heartily at my ignorance of Russian customs, and assured me that the Russians kiss each other like men and women; that it is usually of no meaning and no importance whatever; but that nevertheless I should consider myself more than honored that a Russian minister condescended to kiss a Jew.

After having become acquainted with Russian manners, I found out that the kissing among the Russians is quite customary except during Lent (seven weeks before Easter), when the kissing is strictly forbidden. There exists then a complete desistence from any enjoyment, for during these seven weeks the Russians eat no meat, use even no milk and all their meals are prepared with oil. But as soon as high mass has been performed in the churches and the ceremonies of the resurrection have been gone through on the midnight before Easter, the Russians embrace one another in rapture and ecstacy with the greeting: "Christ has risen from the dead," while the kissed friend answers: "Blessed be he forevermore."

I heard a fine anecdote about the late emperor. He was accustomed on Easter Sunday, when leaving his room, to kiss all the sentinels on guard, and to recite the above-quoted greeting. When one Easter morning he was leaving his room, he addressed the soldier on guard with the words: "Christ has risen from the dead," the soldier answered boldly: "Never more, Your Imperial Majesty." "How so?" questioned the astonished monarch. "I am a Jew," answered the sentinel. The emperor smiled, but ordered that on Easter Sunday a Jewish soldier should not be put on guard at his door.

X.

On Thursday morning, the twenty-eighth of December, 1839, the passengers assembled in the postoffice where two carriages, put on sleighs, were already waiting to carry us to Riga. The conductor asked for our passports, which after being examined he put into a traveling pouch hanging around his shoulders. Thus

we were again deprived of all means of escape and were totally in the hands of our conductor, another agent of the police of the empire; for without a passport no one can move in Russia. Having taken leave of our acquaintances, the sleighs went smoothly off with us from the capital.

It was a cold Russian winter day. Each and every one of us was wrapped in fur from head to feet to protect ourselves against the intense cold. Our company consisted of eight passengers, four in a carriage, and these were drawn by four horses put into one line. Nothing exceeds the swiftness of these little animals, for we made sometimes twenty-eight English miles in a little over an hour. The driver never uses a whip, nor has he any; he only speaks to his horses: "Children, work," or "My friends, hurry on." These are his usual exhortations, and the horses understand these warnings perfectly and fly away as if endowed with the wings of Pegasus. In the more easterly part of Russia, near Kasan, they do not keep the horses in the stable, but let them run about at random; on being needed they are caught in the woods and brought to the sleighs or the carriages, quite unmanageable. They must be tied before they can be harnessed, and are not loosened before the driver is in his place, has taken hold of the reins, and then they are off with a steam engine's rapidity.

Our company consisted chiefly of Germans, and therefore the conversation soon became general and very interesting. But the road was in a terrible condition at that time, as all the roads are in Russia, except the one leading from St. Petersburg to Moscow, and thence to Warsaw. Tossing from one hole to the other we continued for hours; every moment the

sleighs threatened to be upset; our drivers cursed and swore in true Russian style; we were swung, rocked, balanced and counterbalanced as if we were in a ship in the midst of a terrible storm; the vehicle cracked and crashed in every direction, and when at eight o'clock in the evening we arrived at that station where supper was prepared for us, I was so tired by the fatigues that I begged the conductor to leave me there, as I felt unable to continue the journey. I had suffered severely from seasickness when on board the steamboat from Lübeck to St. Petersburg, and it lasted several days, at that time, before I recovered my strength; now undergoing the same fatal rocking and shaking on dry land, I felt seasick again. I used all kinds of entreaties to be left in that tavern, but the passengers laughed at my discouragement, exhorted me to go with them, promised me to stop the carriage on the route whenever I wanted it, and the two ladies of the company used all their influence that I should not leave them, as I was unacquainted with the Russian language and would be left in a place where no assistance could be given to me in case I really should fall sick.

I consented to follow them, but upon the explicit condition that the driver should stop whenever I asked it. It was dark and freezing when we remounted our carriages. For an hour and a half it went on tolerably, but then again I had such a violent attack that the carriage was stopped, I dismounted and fell senseless and fainting to the ground. When I awoke the carriages had left, and I was alone in the gloomy night. I still heard the faint ringing of the bell-harness, and tried, running as hard as I was able, to overtake them. But unacquainted with the road, which was entirely

covered with snow, and not understanding the signs of green bushes, which are put thereon, in order that the wanderer may not lose his way, I took the wrong direction, and instead of following the carriages I ran into the woods. In my anguish I paid no particular attention to the hardships of the road, but after having walked more than an hour without tracing the sleighs I became tired and alarmed, as I was fully aware of the danger of my position. There I was alone in the woods, in the intense cold of a December night; my fur was stiffly frozen and I had no provisions at all in my pockets, without passport, without any legitimate evidence, and I knew well enough how vagrants are treated by the Russian police. It was snowing continually, and whilst I walked on I sank into the snow far above my knees, so that sometimes I risked breaking my legs when trying to rise from a pit or a hole into which I had fallen. I looked about to see whether I could not detect a house, whether the rays of a hospitable light would not show me the way out of my terrible position; nothing stared me in the face but immense snow plains, surrounded by icy trees—plains in which the wolves were still roaming and ravaging. It was near ten o'clock and I had a long, awful night before me; there was no other choice but to march on, and to try to escape freezing to death. My companions, in the meantime, as I heard afterwards, had left their carriages and were anxiously searching for me. The conductor, who is responsible for all the passengers he carries, was quite bewildered. Not knowing what to do, he rode to the next village and brought farmers with torches thither to look for me. The ladies cried and wept bitterly, and nothing was spared to trace me. But after I had fainted I

went in a wrong direction, and at about midnight I felt my strength declining. I froze horribly and could hardly walk any further, so I sat down, and with a devotion never before experienced I recited in the midst of these snow plains my *Maariv* prayer.[19]

But to stop was of no avail, because then I would have fallen asleep, and the fear of being frozen to death stirred up my last energy. I thought of Hagar's wandering in the wilderness and remembered the explanation of one of the commentaries of the Bible, that if she had not given herself up to despair, if she had continued her wanderings courageously, she would have detected the well of water that was near her and would have spared herself the agony of seeing her only son languishing away. I took courage from this remark, and after having rested for ten minutes I continued my hopeless march. Struggling on till two o'clock in the morning through the fathomless snow I began to bleed at the nose, and again fainted away. Upon reviving I strained all my nerves to march on, but soon to my entire dismay observed that for hours I had walked in a circle. I therefore took a new direction, and after another half an hour's walk I felt with real rapture that the ground beneath me was hardening, and I supposed that I was again on the road. But then, instead of going the way to Riga, I took the direction back to St. Petersburg, and went on till four o'clock without meeting any person whatever. The cold had increased intensely; I felt feverish throughout my entire body; I was unable to walk further. Happy in having found a huge stone, I sat down and began to recite the prayer for the dying. I remembered my dear old father, my brothers and sis-

[19] Evening prayer.

ters, my beloved bride, and felt miserably unhappy that I should die this death without once more seeing them, who were dearer to me than my life; that I should perish here without their having any information of me. But I felt my senses fainting, weakness and sleep overpowered me, and although struggling with all the little strength that was left, I fell asleep.

I could hardly have rested there ten minutes when I heard a human voice; it sounded to me as sweet as an angel's greeting, although it was but a Russian serf, bringing a load of hay to the next city. He had observed me, and astonished to find a human being on such a cold night on the plain and open road, he had stooped from his wagon and awakened me. I did not understand the questions he put to me in the Russian language, but using the few Russian words I knew and taking a ruble silver out of my pocket, I entreated him to bring me to the station where last night we had taken supper. There I had perceived a German servant girl, and by her interpretation I hoped to get horses to hurry after the company. The farmer understood my request, pocketed the ruble, took off his fur, put me upon the hay and covered me with his fur coat. On any other occasion I most respectfully would have declined the use of this fur, which is usually full of a certain kind of living, creeping creatures, but that night I accepted it with the most sincere gratitude. The farmer drove on, and when about half way he requested me to descend at an inn and to pay for some brandy. I complied with his request and walked into the inn. There was no light. On the hearth the trunk of a tree was burning, which threw a rather gloomy light through the tavern. Near the fire some Russians, whose horses we had seen at the

door were sitting. We partook of a good deal of brandy and then continued our journey. At six o'clock in the morning we reached the desired station, and half an hour afterwards, provided with a sleigh and a pair of good horses, I was again on the way hurrying after my companions.

XI.

We were driving at a rapid pace in order to overtake, if possible, the post carriages. Exhausted from the sufferings of the previous night I lay down on the straw in the sleigh, and the good-hearted driver again covered me with his fur. I soon fell asleep, but we had not traveled ten miles when the driver awakened me, and I saw the conductor with a captain of the police by the side of the sleigh. The conductor, aware of his responsibility, had stopped at the next station, informed the police of what had happened, and the captain was ordered to search and find me by all means. The conductor had asked the driver whom he was carrying in the sleigh, and being answered, "A passenger who was lost last night," he almost embraced and kissed me and shook hands with me as one does with an old friend. He inquired if I did not feel sick, and when I answered him that I was quite well he ordered the driver to hasten and to stop at the next inn. When we arrived he ordered hot punch, induced me to take two large tumblers of it, which restored my vigor and strength, and half an hour afterwards we joined our old company.

The two ladies were quite bewildered at having persuaded me to continue the journey. The gentlemen assailed me with various questions, assured me of their

sympathy, described their searching after me during the long and cold winter night, adding that they had insisted upon not continuing their journey until I had returned to the company. Having partaken of a hearty breakfast we continued our journey without any accident. We passed the plains of Narva, so greatly renowned in history by the chivalric King of Sweden, Charles XII, who defeated Peter the Great, and who, instead of seizing the opportunity to crush powerful Russia and her aspiring and ambitious czar, indulged in visionary dreams which ended with the downfall of the Swedish kingdom.

On Friday noon we reached Dorpat, the only German university of Russia. I declared to my fellow travelers that I had to leave them, for, as I professed Judaism, it was forbidden me by law to travel on the Sabbath. I never concealed the creed which I professed from any person whatever, and I found it always the best mode to gain the respect of society.

My companions expressed their regret at losing me again, but handed me their cards, as some of the gentlemen resided in Riga. I rested in Dorpat over the Sabbath, visited the university and the library, and was shown there a small book which was found in the cab of Napoleon while he was flying from Russia, and which was captured by the Cossacks. It was the History of Plutarch, in the reading of which the great emperor indulged in his carriage while leading his innumerable army into the deserts of Russia. I neglected, ignoring official courtesy, to pay a visit to my future chief, the Lieutenant-General Kraftstroem, who at that time was the regent of the university and the chief of all the higher and lower schools in the three provinces of Livonia, Kurland and Esthonia.

In Russia, as stated above, everything is carried on by military rules and military discipline. As I had just come from the German university of Munich, and as I had freely indulged in all the scholastic pedantry of philosophy and theology, I could hardly reconcile myself to the idea that my future chief should be a lieutenant-general. When I was in St. Petersburg I was told an anecdote of such a military regent. He had been for years the commander of one of the regiments of the imperial guard, whose men are all of one and the same size and height. He was quite dumbfounded when visiting the library of the university, over which he was appointed regent, to behold large volumes and small-sized books standing together peaceably on one and the same shelf, and the librarian had to use all his eloquence to show him the necessity of such an arrangement.

But not only the regent wears military uniform; the students are also bound to wear the same. During weekdays they wear short overcoats, the color of whose collars designate the different faculties, either philosophical, medical or juridical; so also the buttons. They wear hats with cockades and swords, and are not permitted to show themselves in any other costume. The university is an excellent one, as some of the most prominent German professors are engaged there, and many of the most distinguished professors at the Russian universities—six in number—have been educated there.

I passed the Sabbath very agreeably, although rather affected by the distressing thought that no Jew is permitted to settle in Livonia, and as soon as night set in I continued my journey. By this time I became acquainted with the real mode of Russian trav-

eling. Having no carriage of my own, I had to change the sleigh at every station. My trunk served me as a seat, and I was without any shelter in the intense cold of New Year's night. Nevertheless, I fell asleep, and all went on comfortably, when suddenly I was hurled down from my seat and had sunk into a deep ditch of snow. I awoke and beheld the driver in the same pleasant situation. We looked after the horses, but they stood quite still near us, yet the sleigh was overthrown on one side and my trunk on the other. The driver had also slept; another sleigh, that passed by, had thrown us from the track. We searched around for our luggage, while he continually exclaimed: *"Ob Twoi Mat"!* a phrase which is a horrible malediction. (The Russians frequently use this hideous formula. I once offered a driver one ruble silver if he would drive me only two miles without using those mean words, but we were not gone ten minutes when my ear was offended by that abominable curse.) My driver swore he would get his satisfaction and revenge as soon as we met another sleigh, and soon he was again in the best spirits when he had fulfilled his vow by upsetting a sleigh that ran toward us.

At two o'clock on Sunday afternoon I perceived the steeples of Riga, and all the feelings of uneasiness, uncertainty and anxiety that assail us when standing at the gates of the unknown future of our career were stirring and moving my heart and soul. I had heard of the antipathy the Russian and Polish Jews have towards their German coreligionists. I knew very well how little they think of their abilities, and how far superior they fancy themselves in this respect. I knew that the *Datshel* was a nickname, fully

expressing their innermost sentiments. Besides, my language was quite unintelligible to a great many I had seen in St. Petersburg, as their corrupted jargon intermingled with Russian and Polish words was entirely strange to my ear. My dress was not theirs, and I had heard of many of them that a dresscoat, not covering the trousers, was considered an עֶרְוָה;[20] and as I was but twenty-four years old I feared they would not obey me, as they revered and respected only old age ripened by experience. I was quite at a loss as to the manner in which I would be received. But our swift horses minded neither my disheartened condition nor my thoughtfulness, and at two o'clock p. m. I alighted at the first hotel of Riga.

XII.

But how agreeably was I disappointed when shortly after my arrival the president and a committee of the trustees of the congregation called on me to tender me a hearty welcome. They were all dressed in European style, spoke German correctly, and quite enraptured me with their enlightened conversation. I afterwards found out that most of the Jews living in Riga proper are of German descent, as are also some of their brethren in Mitau, the capital of Kurland, and they retained their German dress. The Jews living in the suburbs of Riga mostly wear the Polish costume, as do also the large majority of the Jews in Kurland. The committee requested me to pass the night in the hotel, and on the next morning they would bring me to my room, which was a part of the schoolhouse, that the congregation had rented.

[20] Unchaste.

On the next morning I entered the schoolhouse. I was received at the door by the sexton of the congregation, a venerable old man of sixty-eight years, with a silvery white beard, and attired in his best holiday suit. Kindliness of feeling, the offspring of true, heavenly piety, beamed from his countenance, and while he was shaking hands with me I felt that there was no prejudice against me in the heart of my future host, for being then a bachelor the trustees had provided that I should board with him. He introduced me to his wife, and I felt at once assured that I should pass my time very comfortably in their family circle.

I was shown the schoolrooms, which were airy and well lighted, and the vestry, which was on the first floor. I was then led to my room, which the congregation had furnished neatly and comfortably. The ladies of the trustees then waited on me, offering me their kind services to bring my little household in order; and it being customary in Russia to provide for the stranger all kind of cakes, wine and brandies, in order to enable him to entertain those who are coming to welcome him, I was provided by the ladies with a large supply of these articles. Having exchanged the usual compliments for these marks of kindness the trustees remarked that in the afternoon they would introduce me to their rabbi.

We alighted at his house at six o'clock in the evening, and were ushered into his modestly furnished room. I never saw a more patriarch-like man than the old Rabbi Orele (Aaron) was. The deepest respect, the truest reverence filled my heart and soul when he came near to shake hands with me and to bid me welcome. He was a man of high stature,

adorned with silver locks and a snow-white beard, had one blue and one black eye, and attired in his silken *Schubetze* and his fine fur cap, he could have sat as a model for one of those beautiful heads which we admire in the immortal pictures of Raphael and Michel Angelo. Though some sixty years of age he looked robust and healthy; his high forehead, furrowed as it was, showed that he was accustomed to mental labor; the stern look of his bright eyes proved that he was a man of determined character, and his affability told you at once that behind his external sternness was hidden an intense kindness of heart. He enjoyed the unbounded confidence of his congregation in religious affairs, being an eminent Talmudist, and like all the rabbis of Russia, exercising the jurisdiction in civil lawsuits, his verdicts, given according to the Jewish Code, were considered so just and so considerate that even Christian merchants applied to him for his decision, preferring his judgments to those of the bribed Russian courts.

It is astonishing, what an immense influence the rabbis in Russia exercise. The administration of this umpire is not acknowledged as such by the government, and is only called upon by the free will of the parties. I heard of a very interesting fact that occurred in C——, a small town in Poland. The Reverend H., who occupies there the rabbinical chair, was a man of but thirty-six years of age, but universally respected and esteemed for his great Talmudical knowledge and his fearless and undaunted justice. Two members of his congregation once called upon him in a lawsuit, the one a rich, wealthy and influential man, the other a poor tradesman. Before opening the case the rabbi ordered them to

pledge their word of honor that they would abide by his decision, else he would not accept the case, knowing the quarrelsome character of the rich man. Both complied with his order, and the case having been pleaded on both sides, it was decided against the rich man. But he, instead of adhering to his pledge, brought the case before the court, where he hoped to carry it by the influence of his means. The rabbi could not do anything against this faithlessness; but on the eve of the Day of Atonement the inhabitants of the town were astonished to see the rabbi going to the synagogue a full hour before the service commenced. They also hurried to the place of worship and found their spiritual guide absorbed in deep meditation. He remained in this situation till the rich man came into the House of God and then he arose from his seat, proclaiming with stentorian voice that he would not allow service to commence until the rich man had left the synagogue. "A man that injures his fellow man," he said, "retains what does not belong to him; he can not hope for divine mercy and the heavenly forgiveness of the holy day and sets a bad example to the whole congregation. We will not begin prayer till you, Mr. S——, will have left our company." The man was thunderstruck. The solemnity of the hour, the awe of the day, the fear of heavenly justice, the remorse of a bad conscience, the sternness of the rabbi, the exposure before the congregation made such an irresistible impression upon him that he hurried to the rabbi's chair, acknowledged his wrong, begged for his pardon, and promised that after *Jom Kippur* he would surely redress the wrong he had done. "I can not believe you," answered the rabbi. "You have vio-

lated your pledge once, and I reiterate my verdict, that we shall not begin prayer before you have left our synagogue." "Rabbi, good rabbi, what shall I do not to bring upon me the anger of God and the scorn of the congregation? I can not bear this your menace," replied the man. "Go home," said the rabbi, "and bring the money you owe to the poor tradesman." "I have no money at home," answered he; "I paid out today all that I had on hand." "Then go and bring your silverware; I shall take it and keep it for you in pawn till you pay the money." The man hurried home, brought silverware twice the amount of the debt, and the rabbi with a composed and satisfied countenance deposited it in the Holy Ark with the *Sepher Thora.* Then turning from the steps before the Holy Ark to the congregation he said, "According to the words of our sages, the most pious man can not occupy the high station of a repenting sinner. I therefore beg Mr. S—— to take during this *Jom Kippur* my place in the synagogue, while I with a heart full of heavenly joy will retire to his pew." Notwithstanding the remonstrance of Mr. S—— he again had to comply with the desire of the rabbi, and the day after *Jom Kippur* the lawsuit was peaceably and amicably settled. Such a moral influence does a great deal of good amongst the Jews in Russia and insures peace, justice and good feelings.

But let us return to the rabbi of Riga. He addressed me after the usual *Shalom Alechem,* "You're quite young, doctor, and a stranger. 'You shall love the stranger,' says the Bible. I will be your father, and whenever you want my advice please call on me and I shall always be happy to assist you where and

whenever I can." I thanked him for this cordial welcome, and he then introduced me to his family.

XIII.

The rabbi's wife had once been a beauty, and was a kind and good-hearted lady. Not being able to speak good German, she tried by every mark of attention to show me her pleasure at seeing me in her home and becoming the assistant of the rabbi. She ordered several dishes of fine preserves to be brought in; lit the lamp that was used only on Friday night; put on her holiday dress, and entertained me in the most hospitable way. I did not accept of all the different dishes and heard afterwards that she felt rather piqued by it, for in Russia it is customary that the guests taste of everything that the lady offers if they would not violate the laws of Russian hospitality.

Being informed of her pique the day after my visit, I hurried to her house and apologized for my impoliteness. This was forgiven only on the condition that I accept an invitation to dine with her on Saturday next. Her dress consisted of a gown, the waist of which was very awkward, being high in the back. This is usually worn by all the Jewish ladies in the northwestern part of Russia. On her head she had a Turkish turban, round her neck a golden chain with an immense medal, over her dress an apron, without which the Jewish ladies never appear in public, besides which when leaving the house they wear a short mantilla hanging round their shoulders.

I passed the evening very agreeably and left the rabbi's house with the assurance that he always

would be a friend and advocate of mine. The trustees then requested me to visit the next day my future chief, the director of the schools of Livonia, Counselor Napierski, and to go with them in the afternoon to see the Russian bishop. The director, to whom I handed Count Uwaroff's letter of recommendation—an honor not very often enjoyed by him —received me in a friendly manner, but I observed some kind of reserve, which my friends afterwards explained to me. The inhabitants of Riga, fearing the continual encroachments of the Russian government which are tending to russify these German provinces, watch with the utmost jealousy their rights and privileges. By bribery and every kind of influence they try to retain the German language in the courts, in the schools, in the university, and use all means to prevent the Russian church and the Jews from taking root in Livonia. The government for a long time had coaxed them by appointing Germans as governors-general, governors, etc., knowing that they were faithful subjects, sincerely adhering to the Russian crown, but jealously watching their German inclinations. The government did not like to hurt their feelings, though it was bent upon carrying out its own views, and therefore several privileges were granted to the Russian Church and the Jews. Thus a Russian bishopric was created in Riga, and the bishop, being a diplomat as well as a clergyman, began to meddle in everything, trying continually to extend his influence. Thus the Jews had obtained the permission of establishing a school in Riga, though they had not yet the right of a permanent settlement in that city. The director, therefore, though welcoming me in a very friendly manner,

had his doubts about my secret instructions and my personal intentions, and though promising me every assistance in his power, he was too much of a Livonian to take his promises in good earnest. Besides being a fanatical Protestant, he tried to convert as many Jews as he possibly could, and was afraid that his missionary efforts would be checked by my influence. Nevertheless, as long as I was in Riga he put no obstacle in my way, and we fared pretty well together.

The bishop, on the contrary, on whom I called in the afternoon, though a strong missionary of the Greek Orthodox Church, received me as a friend who would assist him in breaking down the obstinacy of these German *Buergers*. He lived in the suburbs of Riga; for years he had petitioned the municipal government to grant him the permission of erecting the bishop's palace in the city itself, but he had always been refused sternly and coldly. Shortly before my arrival the lawsuit had been decided by the Senate of St. Petersburg in his favor, and his gratification was intense. In order to make another breach in the bulwarks of Livonian privileges he had advocated the establishment of a Jewish school in Riga; and the Jews were highly indebted to his untiring endeavors, owing to which they had carried this point against the great wealth and influence of Riga. They considered him as their bulwark, for they hoped that as soon as they once would have taken firm foot in the city, they would gain the other points too, namely, to be considered and treated as citizens of Riga.

His residence in the suburbs was a frame house, nicely built and comfortably furnished. The choir

of his Episcopal Church, as was usual, was living with him under the same roof, and formed the staff of his servants. The trustees and I were ushered into the salon, and five minutes afterwards the bishop entered the room. I had never before seen a Russian bishop, and was quite surprised at the fine and majestic appearance of the man. The Russian clergy, though divided in two classes—the married clergy and the monks—are always dressed in their clerical costume. They all wear long, very long, hair and beard, like the *Nazir* of the Bible, silk coats tied with a silken girdle, and over it a velvet garment; the hats of the married clergy are very large, their long sticks are adorned with huge silver buttons, and most of the order are decorated with the different orders of the empire. The monks—the number of whom amounts to only five thousand, the Empress Catherine having confiscated the large estates of the Greek Church for the secular purposes of the government, ordering that the whole clergy should be supported at the expense of the government—the monks, I say, never go bareheaded, but wear a cap, like the priests in the temple of old in Jerusalem, adorned with a black veil, and their robes and garments are made of stuff of a black color. The bishops, however, are permitted to wear velvet garments of a blue, green and red color; a large golden cross, hanging on a golden chain, continually adorns their breast; they always carry in their hands another little cross hanging on a rosary, and the highest classes of the imperial decorations shine upon their garments. The Metropolitans, the highest clergymen of the church, wear white caps adorned with large

diamond crosses and white veils, and their whole attire consists of the most costly stuff.

The trustees who accompanied me kissed the bishop's hand, as the Russians usually do. I, being dressed in my Jewish clerical costume, did not comply with this ceremony, and he took no offense at it. After the first introductory compliments, he inquired after my birthplace, the university where I finished my studies, and being informed that my professors had been Christians, he asked me, like Count Pratasoff in St. Petersburg did, whether I believed in Christ. Having been answered in the negative, he seemed quite puzzled, but dropped the subject, and wanted to know when we would open the school, as he intended to be present at its inauguration. Having received the necessary information, he invited us all to take a cup of tea with him, and I still today must confess that I never took a better cup of tea than I usually did at the bishop's palace.

The Russians are proud of their tea, and are really masters in preparing it. The tea loses very much of its flavor and its strength by being exported in ships, the water injuring its original flavor. The Russians, after the Chinese, claim to have the best tea, as they import it into European Russia over Siberia always by land. The value of the stock of tea at the large fair of Nizhni Novgorod, amounts to twenty million rubles, and is sold in order to be distributed throughout all Russia in the short term of three weeks. When I left Russia in 1845, a Russian grandee wished me to take some tea along for his son who was attached to the Imperial Embassy at Munich, but hearing that I was going by steamer, he determined not to send the present, as it would lose all

its flavor during the passage. The Russians have a peculiar apparatus called *Samovar,* in which they boil their tea, and indeed it is quite another beverage than the tea we sip in Germany.

The bishop, having entertained us with the utmost hospitality, dismissed us in the most friendly manner, entreating me to come very often as he had matters of importance to discuss with me.

XIV.

In the course of the week I made the acquaintance of a great many Jewish merchants. I never saw a finer set of men. Their faces beam with intelligence, their eyes are full of spirit, their minds are finely developed, and in their exterior, though bent down by Russian aristocratic tyranny, they have an appearance of nobility which reminds one of the noble bearing of the Polish aristocracy with whom they had constant intercourse. Dressed in their fine black silk *Schubetze,* over which they wear a wide garment of the same stuff, covering their heads with fine fur caps, they show in their movements more self-confidence and in their faces by far more intelligence than all other European Jews. Their beards give them an air of manliness, their high foreheads proclaim great mental ability, their features are of such a fine Oriental cut that they certainly would be numbered amongst the nicest of the Caucasian race if in their intercourse with the bribed and greedy officers they had not become accustomed to a self-degradation and self-humiliation that disgusts every European not used to such contemptible crawling and sneaking.

The Jewish merchants from the interior of Russia carry on the most important trade in products in the city of Riga. Riga, being after Odessa the largest commercial port of the empire, exports to England, Holland and Germany flour, linseed, corn and timber. The Jewish merchants come to Riga in the beginning of the winter, make large contracts with the commission houses for immense sums, and having received an advance of sometimes twenty to thirty thousand rubles silver, they return to the provinces of Vitebsk and Mogilef, make their purchases, and when the navigation of the Duna reopens, thousands of barks arrive loaded with merchandise. It is a fine sight that one witnesses in the month of May on the immense bridge which connects Riga with its many suburbs. On the one side are lying these Russian canoes with their dirty crews—no flag, no sign adorns them; on the other side are the splendid English, German and French three-masters with their waving flags and banners and their robust seamen. The police are continually on the guard to prevent any fight between these antagonistic nationalities, who are engaged in exchanging those products of peace. The Jews are busy brokers, merchants and speculators, and many make their fortune thereby. But even if a merchant does not return with the merchandise for which the cash has been advanced to him the Christian commission houses do not mind it, as they reap immense profits in these transactions.

The merchants in Russia are exempt from military duty, but are divided into three different classes, paying different taxes according to the amount of which they are permitted to do a certain amount of business. The first class pays yearly eight hundred, the

second six hundred, the third two hundred and fifty rubles silver, and the Jews, anxious to be released from military duty, join such a class whenever their feeble means will permit it.

They all welcomed me heartily, but were astonished that I, a man twenty-four years of age, was not yet married. This was quite beyond their conception. Being accustomed to marry their children at quite an early age, they can not believe that a man, especially a minister, can live in chastity without having entered the state of matrimony. I excused myself with the laws of my native land, where the laws place every obstacle in the way of the Jews, but I was unable to satisfy them.

The *Shadchanim* (marriage agents) began to busy themselves about me, and I received letters and proposals from every part of Russia, the one offering me a young lady of sixteen with a dowry of five hundred ducats and jewels of the value of two hundred ducats besides; the other advising me to marry a girl in humble ranks, but whose family were rabbis, and therefore regarded as Jewish nobility; a third intended to marry me to a young widow with two children and a fine dwelling, besides a few hundred rubles; the fourth a divorced young lady, etc. I laid all these letters, with which I was overwhelmed, aside smilingly, without answering any of them.

On the next Sabbath I delivered my first lecture, which was also the first German lecture ever delivered in Russia. The German part of my audience was well pleased, but the Polish Talmudical scholars were not quite satisfied. They are not used to German sermons, because they are too plain for them;

they are used to their rabbinical sophistries, to their cabalistic subtleties. They are used to find difficulties in passages of the Scriptures where none exist, and though they solve their invented problems with much talent and ingenuity, this kind of *Derashah,*[21] in which the old *Maggidim*[22] indulged, has been done away with in western Europe. The rabbi, believing that my sermon did not meet with the approbation of the Polish party, approached me, saying: "Why did you not read a piece of the *Baal Akedah*[23] or the *Shelo?*[24] That would have suited them better than a sermon." I appeased my reverend friend, and on the next Sabbath I fully satisfied him by delivering a sermon in the spirit and the manner of a *Derashah.*

In the meantime our school had been organized. The curls (*Peoth*) of the Polish boys had mostly been cut off and they came to the schoolhouse neatly and properly dressed. A large number had been enrolled, the teachers had been engaged and the formal opening of the school had been arranged for. The portrait of the emperor embellished the walls, the festival arrangements had been finished, and we awaited the invited guests who had promised to witness a ceremony by which the Jews celebrated their first victory over their adversaries. The governor of the state, the director of the schools with a large staff of teachers, the Catholic and Protestant clergy were present, but not in full uniform; although de-

[21] Homiletical discourse.

[22] Preachers.

[23] A philosophical commentary on the Pentateuch by Isaac Arama (1420-1494).

[24] A cabalistical work of great renown by Isaiah Horowitz (1555-1630).

feated, they could not bring themselves to honor thus a Jewish school. But at last a stately carriage, drawn by four excellent horses, stopped at the portal, and the Russian bishop, the secret ally of the Jews, alighted, dressed in full canonicals and adorned with all his ribbons and decorations. After a short prayer by the rabbi I delivered the inaugural sermon, which was received with undivided applause. The whole audience congratulated me on this effort, and from that day I was well received in the highest circles of the aristocracy and plutocracy. I was requested to publish the sermon, and I sent copies of it to the emperor, all the members of the imperial family, the ministers and various high functionaries in St. Petersburg.

Our school was soon in successful operation. Our Jewish boys made rapid progress in every department, and especially those who had been instructed already in the Talmud, were the best in every branch. It can not be denied that the Talmudical study is the best means to develop rapidly the mental faculties. It is not a matter of mere memory, not a study of dry and dreary subjects, even not a field of regular mental exercise. The short style in which the Talmud is written, the hieroglyphs, which continually have to be deciphered, through which the mind has to find its way, uses and forces the student from the beginning to an independent application of the mind, and prepares a sure success for any profession which the young man may afterwards select. This truth is proved clearly by the fact that many eminent men in Germany up to their eighteenth year studied only the Talmud without knowing the simple alphabet, and when they turned to the classics or any de-

partment of the university, in a short time they reached the highest degree of excellence. Our Salomon Maimon, Edward Gans, Hitzig and Valentine gave evidence of this, and certainly the greatest men in Jewish theology of the present age are pupils of the old Talmudical schools.

A few weeks afterwards I was called upon by the servant of the Russian bishop, who handed me a large packet, marked with his seal, with the request for an immediate answer. I opened it hastily and beheld therein two large manuscripts written in French, defending the principles of the Christian Church. I went to his residence and asked him what had led him to send me these manuscripts. He answered that he had reported my arrival to the synod, had communicated the fact that I had studied Christian theology, but that I did not believe in the doctrines of the Christian Church, whereupon he had received the order of the president of the synod, "It being impossible to study Christian theology without being convinced of its truth," the bishop should try again to give me the necessary instruction. I expressed my regret at the whole correspondence and my determination that I would not continue my visits if any religious topic would be brought up for further discussion. I left him and saw him but once more during my stay in Riga.

XV.

Time passed, the school increased numerically, and I gained more time to attend to the duties incumbent on my office as preacher. I had heard that some orphan boys were wandering about the city, destitute

of all and every means of support, without any home or shelter whatever, and subsisting on the occasional charity of some kind-hearted and benevolent persons. I proposed to the board of trustees to establish forthwith an orphan asylum, and three rooms of our schoolhouse being unoccupied, we resolved upon furnishing them and opening at once a refuge for these unhappy children. The means for carrying out this laudable object being provided by voluntary contributions, the arrangements were finished in half a day, a contract with the sexton's wife was made for their board, and I and two members of the board were appointed a committee to find the neglected boys.

We were sure of finding them only in some poor shanty in the suburbs, and at once went thither in search of them. We called on many poor families; they had been there, but had left again. At last we found them near a baker's oven, black as soot, in rags, freezing and weeping, and afraid we would do them harm. But being informed of our good intentions they clasped our hands, fell at our feet, stammered their thanks, promising to be henceforth good and obedient boys.

We were obliged first to have them bathe. We then sent them to a clothier, informing him that the orphans were found, but in such a state of ragged nakedness that it was impossible to bring them to the schoolhouse. Without a moment's hesitation, without asking for any remuneration whatever, but prompted by the noble feelings of true Jewish charity, he at once forwarded six complete suits, and we had the heavenly satisfaction of seeing the orphans comfortably lodged at ten o'clock in the evening.

The ladies of the congregation sent a great many more things the next morning, and soon every apprehension of not being able to carry on successfully the young and small establishment faded away. Of the poverty in general existing among our Jewish brethren in Russia, the Jews in Europe have not the least idea; neither of the immense sums spent by the wealthier Jews of that vast empire for the relief of the poor and indigent.

One fine summer morning a lady called on me begging me to accompany her about two miles from the city where a whole Jewish family was in an almost incredible state of distress. I ordered a carriage, we rode out and, my God! what an awful, what a gloomy spectacle presented itself to my eyes. In a miserable hut, without a door and without any windows, I found father and mother and five children prostrated with typhoid fever. The father and four children lay on the floor on some bundles of straw, covered with ragged garments; the mother, in the highest delirium, lay on a poor couch upon an old mattress, and the daughter, a girl of fifteen years, in the heat of the fever and with loosened hair, lay on a wooden trunk. There was none who ministered to them, no nurse, no physician; there were no provisions, no medicine and not a penny in the whole hut to save the life of these miserable and poor creatures.

A farmer passing by in the morning had observed the family, and hurrying away he informed my companion of what he had seen. I begged her to stay till I would be back; and she willingly complying with my request I hurried to Dr. Levi, a converted Jew, who with his usual benevolence and charity set

out with me to alleviate these indescribable sufferings. After having carefully examined the horrible state of the patients, he ordered the nearest apothecary to furnish on his account all the ordered medicines, besides promising to visit them twice a day. He then advised me to hurry back to the city to hire a nurse and to provide for the destitute sufferers. In the course of one hour I had collected over fifty rubles, a nurse was sent out and a committee formed to visit the wretched sufferers daily.

Five weeks afterward a man entered my room, and without uttering a word he ran to me and kissed my hands and my boots. I was frightened at the extraordinary behavior of the stranger, but what was my joyful astonishment when I recognized the father of the sick family, who with the most sincere gratitude assured me that all were saved and that by the liberal donations of his coreligionists he was in quite a comfortable position.

Another time I was called upon by a member of my congregation to save him with his family from being set in the street by his landlord. "The winter," he said, "is a hard one; for more than three months I have had no employment; all our clothes and furniture are already pawned; we have no means whatever to sustain our life; we have not a penny to pay the rent of another humble dwelling; and, doctor, if you have no compassion on us I and my good wife and innocent children will have no shelter tomorrow, no refuge but the almshouse." I ordered him to go home, and to wait for me in the evening. I soon had collected a considerable amount, and about eight o'clock in the evening I was at the poor man's door. I peeped in through the slit of the closed window.

A dim lamp sparingly illuminated the room, which was furnished with but a few ragged straw chairs and a large box instead of a table. No fire was in the chimney, and hunger and cold were stamped upon the pale and trembling faces of the poor, lovely children. I knocked at the door. All of them were roused up by the fear that the police was there to remove them. The children ran to their mother, clinging to her knees and begging for shelter against the hard officers. I stepped into the room, and all their eyes were turned towards me inquisitively, asking whether I had come as their saving angel, or with the despondent answer that I could not do anything for them. I handed the father the money and hurried away, for I could not bear the outbursts of their gratitude.

These same poor creatures, with whom every large city is quite disproportionately overburdened, these families who spend in a whole week sometimes not more than one ruble, these poor men and women, who live on Sabbath and holydays on some bread, potatoes and herrings, do not consider themselves as celebrating the Sabbath without providing at least their two lamps, and saving a penny which before the commencement of the service they throw in the almsbox of the synagogue. Charity and benevolence are the distinguishing character of the Russian Jews, and even the poorest would not think of having fulfilled his religious duties without contributing to the treasury of the almoner of the congregation.

The congregation themselves provide enormous sums for the wants of their poor and indigent. In Russia it is a law that every man has to pay annually a capital tax of eight rubles to the imperial

treasury; the trustees of the Jewish congregations are responsible for the amount to be collected from their members. And in order to raise it without any inconvenience to the poor a tax of one cent is raised from every pound of *Kosher* meat sold, which tax, in the city of Vilna, amounts annually to thirty-six thousand rubles, wherewith the taxes of the poor are paid, and the splendid Jewish hospital is supported. But without such efficient and continuous aid, starvation among at least one-third of the Russian Jews would be the order of the day, and it requires all the combined and untiring efforts of our Russian brethren to alleviate a state of suffering and misery which is entirely unheard of in Germany.

XVI.

About six months after my arrival in Riga, one Saturday afternoon, I was sitting in my study when the *Parnass,* Mr. Benjamin Nachman, entered my room. He looked extraordinarily happy, but I could not guess the cause of it. "What is the matter, sir?" I asked him, after some remarks. "Something astonishing must have occurred else you would not be in such a good humor."

"Certainly, doctor," he answered, "the governor has just sent for me; having called on him he ordered me to inform you forthwith that His Majesty, the emperor, has sent you a valuable diamond ring in acknowledgment of your address delivered at the inauguration of the school. He had inquired of the Minister of the Interior, Count Stroganoff, whether he knew you, and being answered in the affirmative the emperor asked again whether he had read your

sermon, with which he himself was exceedingly pleased. And the minister confirming the good opinion of the emperor, the latter continued: 'Lilienthal deserves to be rewarded for his excellent effort; what do you think I should send him?' The minister left this question to the decision of the emperor, who ordered a diamond ring to be presented to you in his name; and the governor wishes you to be at his residence this evening at six o'clock to hand you the imperial gift."

I was quite dumbfounded and stunned with joy. In Germany how scarce are these royal tokens of approbation! How many trials of faithful services have the officers to go through before they can boast of the least exceptional distinction; and I, a stranger and but a short time in the country, honored with such an imperial favor! I really did not know what to answer or how to believe it. At last I found words and said: "Oh, what will my old father say? How satisfied will he be with me!" Young as I was, I was quite in rapture the whole afternoon, and awaited anxiously the evening to call on the governor.

"Your fortune is made in Russia," the governor said to me. "You have drawn the emperor's attention to yourself, and that is all you need to insure your success. I congratulate you heartily on the imperial gift I have the honor to present to you, and tomorrow I shall send you the official document accompanying it." I thanked him for his good wishes, and could not restrain myself from looking at the ring, which had in its midst a big smaragd, adorned with two lines of diamonds. Dismissed by this high functionary, I hurried to Director Napierski, whom, as

my next chief, I had to inform of the present forwarded to me by another minister than the one under whose command we were standing. The director was quite confounded, but hiding his astonishment, he congratulated me too, and told me that he would report about it at once to the department. I created there some sensation favorable to my future career, all the officers known to the emperor being continually treated with particular kindness.

Some time afterwards the director sent me notice that the curator, Lieutenant-General Kraftstroem, had arrived from Dorpat, and that on the next day he would visit our school. We made the necessary preparations to meet all the expectations of military discipline; every boy was reviewed by a committee, in order to appear as clean and proper as a soldier, and finally the places for the pupils were measured out with a cord, so that they formed straight lines as on a parade. These trifles are not matters of secondary consideration in Russia, for Nicholas himself, when visiting the colleges and imperial boarding schools, sometimes ordered the boys to take off their trousers and boots, to see whether their drawers and stockings were clean.

At eleven o'clock the carriage drove to our door, and a general, fully six feet high, accompanied by the director, alighted. Being introduced to him, he asked me rather sternly why I had not called on him when passing through Dorpat. I excused myself on the score of the accident that had befallen me on my journey to Riga, and without continuing the subject he ordered me to show him into the schoolroom. He entered it, and at once exclaimed: "That does not look like a Jewish schoolroom, and I am quite

pleased with the appearance of the boys. You must have had great trouble, doctor, with your Polish pupils, to bring them in so short a time to such a state of propriety, order and cleanliness."

"Not at all, Your Excellency," I replied. "Our Polish boys are the most gifted I ever met with; it required not more than the usual attention and some encouragement to get on exceedingly well with them, and I have not the least doubt that in six months hence our school will compare most favorably with any in Your Excellency's district."

"You are rather too confident, doctor. I should rather feel astonished at seeing your prophecy fulfilled."

Instead of enlarging on this fruitless discussion, I asked him for permission to examine the boys in his presence, and he felt so satisfied that he invited me to come and see him in the afternoon.

After having addressed the boys in a very kind manner, and having shaken hands with me, he took leave. In the hall he saw a box with the inscription: "Alms for our orphans". He asked the director to give him a ducat, and to be very careful that it be not a clipped one. Deeply offended at this untimely hint, I replied: "Your Excellency, this subject is not taught in our school, and hence never mentioned before our boys". He smiled, saying: "Good, doctor; very good". The next morning a plain man came to visit the school. "I am Professor R——, the Commissioner of the University, and am here to examine your school", he said; and without further ceremony he took off his cloak and continued for four hours the most rigid examination of the

pupils. He left highly pleased, remarking: "Doctor, you shall soon hear from me".

Four weeks afterwards I received an official paper of the minister, Count Uwaroff, informing me that the emperor was highly pleased with the professor's report about the progress made by my pupils in the Russian language and in their general deportment, joining to this second imperial distinction his expressions of sincere acknowledgment for my endeavors with the assurance that my services should be duly rewarded. Five weeks afterwards I received an order from the department to start for St. Petersburg immediately, the minister being in want of my advice and service in the deliberation on the general affairs of the Jews in the Russian empire.

XVII.

The Jews felt rather displeased at my having been called to St. Petersburg in order to participate in the deliberations on the Jewish affairs of the empire. Being but twenty-four years of age, they said, a foreigner, and totally unacquainted either with their religious customs and habits, or with the sly and cunning diplomacy of the Russian government, I must be quite unfit for the enormous and responsible task, to the accomplishment of which I was invited. I would try, they continued, to germanize them, would trust to and believe every insinuation of the authorities, and these, under the pretext of having acquired the consent of a Jewish rabbi, would dare to justify any of their proselytizing schemes. And they were not quite wrong in their mode of reasoning. They had just witnessed what cruel,

harsh and barbarous measures the emperor had ordered against the Catholics in confiscating and destroying their monasteries; they had learned but a short time ago what inhuman tricks had been played, what an autocratic course had been pursued in bringing over the *Staroverzi* (a Russian sect) into the bosom of the Greek Church, and they did not expect anything good from my visit to the Russian capital. But during the short time I had passed in Riga I had acquired information enough about the intentions of the czar and the manner in which his propositions usually were carried out, and had resolved upon speaking out freely and openly my opinion, unmindful of the consequences it would have for myself.

The minister was pleased to see me, and ordered me at once to draw up a plan for the reorganization of the whole Jewish education. "The Committee of Ministers", he remarked to me, "appointed by His Majesty to carry his well intentioned reforms into effect has been ordered to resume forthwith its labors, and it being my province to prepare the documents necessary for the better education of the Jews, I thought it advisable to send for you, Professor Risberg having recommended your young school to my particular attention. It is my intention to establish some Jewish higher colleges, some higher and a large number of primary schools. You will draw up a plan for all these institutions, define the subjects of instruction, the method to be pursued, and so forth, and the earlier your task will be finished the more you will oblige me."

I thanked His Excellency for this unmerited confidence, but stated at once that since my sojourning in Riga I had learned that my coreligionists were

full of mistrust touching all the proposed measures of the government. "I am fully aware", I continued, "of the risk I run in using this expression, partly by exposing my Jewish brethren to still more unfavorable treatment by the government, partly by provoking the authorities, who really may be well disposed towards their Jewish subjects. But the entire future prosperity of the Russian Jews being at stake, I think it improper either to disguise my feelings or to conceal anything from Your Excellency. I know if the plan of giving the Jews a better training more adapted to the wants of the time than the exclusively Talmudical they have enjoyed heretofore is not carried out, that the government will be fully entitled to use any means it may choose to bring the Jews to terms, and may be justified in the eyes of the whole civilized world, even in using the most barbarous measures to carry out its benevolent and enlightened object. But, Your Excellency, I may call it by this noble name only on the condition that the emperor means really and sincerely a reform of his Jewish subjects; but in case of the whole being but a farce, a pretext for wholesale proselytism, then you may be sure that your labors will not be crowned with the desired success. Though the most unexpected sufferings may be heaped upon my brethren, I feel assured that they are ready, as they were during the last eighteen centuries, to endure any misery rather than to give up their religion".

"What justifies", the minister interrupted me hastily and angrily, "these suppositions of your brethren"?

"The course", I answered frankly, "the Russian

government has pursued against them since the ascension of His Majesty to the imperial throne. The Jews have been subjected to all burdensome taxations, and no favor whatever has been granted them. They entered the military service, and though recommended by their superiors for their skill and their good behavior, the promotion to a sergeantship is refused to them; they have entered the colleges, visited the universities, and whenever they applied for an appointment it was granted, but under the condition of becoming converts to Christianity. Therefore the Jews see in the whole undertaking only a plan of wholesale proselytism, and do not greet it with that sincere joy which I expected on their part".

"Well", asked the minister, "what can the government do to remove their doubts"?

"To grant at once", I replied, "their emancipation; or if the government considers this step a hasty one, to grant them at least some favors, convincing them unquestionably that their religious rights will not be infringed upon, nor their liberties be curtailed further, and that a bright, hopeful future is in store for them".

The minister tried to appease my gloomy forebodings, assuring me that the intentions of the czar were good indeed, and ordered me to begin my task forthwith. In the course of three weeks I had finished the desired documents, and having perused them, he expressed to me his entire satisfaction. They were translated into the Russian language, and formed the basis for the papers sent to the Committee of Ministers.

He then charged me to draw up a paper stating the reason why the direction of the religious affairs

of the Jews should be taken away from the Department of the Minister of the Interior and transferred to the Department of Public Instruction. In former times the Minister of Instruction was charged with the entire direction of the religious affairs of the Jews, but about ten years before my arrival in Russia a division entrusted with the direction of the religious affairs of all the denominations, except the Russian, had been formed in the Department of the Interior. The minister was anxious to have this important subject restored to his department, and ordered me to write an elaborate document. I handed it to him after three days, and he was so pleased with the paper that he sent it to the emperor for approval. But Nicholas sent it back for consideration to the Committee of Ministers, who, defeating this plan, felt rather displeased with this untimely and uncalled for statement.

The minister, nevertheless, had obtained a rather good opinion of my real abilities, and when three weeks afterwards he sent me back to Riga, he promised me that my services should not be forgotten, and that he would make use of them very soon.

XVIII.

After having returned to Riga I was welcomed heartily by all the members of my congregation, who were rather uneasy about my returning into their midst. They were afraid that, as happened somewhat later, the minister would retain me in St. Petersburg, while they themselves were still badly in need of my humble services, and their joy therefore was sincere and intense. Amongst the visitors was

also the only member of the sect of the Chassidim in my congregation, Rabbi Nechemjah, a man of an imposing, patriarchical appearance, but of fanatical, ultramissionary principles. He had come, driven by curiosity. He wanted to know what was going on in St. Petersburg, and what the minister wanted of the *Datschel,* and after having answered his manifold inquiries I addressed him: "But now, Rabbi Nechemjah, please state to me openly and frankly, what do you think of my having been called to the capital? I am aware that you do not look upon it favorably, and therefore I wish to know your opinion, as it will represent the view of perhaps a very large majority of my Russian coreligionists".

"Well, doctor", answered he, "I will tell you a *Mashal* (fable) covering the whole matter. There was once a king who had a great many Jews in his kingdom; but never having seen a Jew, and knowing something about their peculiarities, he ordered that a Jew be sent to his court. This order having been communicated to the Jews, a convention of all the rabbis was called for electing the proper man in order to make a good impression upon the royal master. The man was soon found; but some rabbis suggested that it would be unwise and quite inadvisable to send a man with a long beard, and it was therefore resolved to permit the Jew to cut off his beard. The beard having disappeared, the *Peos* (long curls) made a very poor and gloomy appearance, and there was no alternative left but to cut off the *Peos* too. The man had then rather a German face, and his *Schubetze* and fur cap would not correspond with the proposed changes and alterations. Well, the rabbis called a final meeting in which they agreed to

grant the Jew the permission to discard his peculiar Jewish garb and to dress himself in the latest Parisian style. This being done, the Jew was dispatched to the capital, where the king at once granted him an audience. But what was the Jew's astonishment when upon his entering the royal chamber the king exclaimed: 'That man is no Jew at all; send him back immediately!' "

The whole company laughed at this witty anecdote. I joined in the laughter, and for years the proverb was current, "This is no Jew at all". But such a witticism is often more suggestive than the plain assertion of the truth, and I foresaw quite well what kind of vexations were in store for me as soon as the minister would send me amongst the Jews proper in order to begin the establishment of schools and of reform.

Soon afterwards I was visited by the Board of Trustees of the Jewish congregation of Mitau to come there for the purpose of assisting in the celebration of a thanksgiving day appointed by the Jews of that city. Mitau is the capital of the state of Kurland. The number of the Jews in that province is very large. Many flourishing congregations are to be found there; some are of German, some of Polish origin, and their costumes and customs are therefore almost equally divided. But poverty, extreme poverty, reigning in almost all the congregations, the Jews of Kurland were the first to avail themselves of the permission granted to them by the emperor to settle as farmers in the interior of Russia.

As everywhere in Europe, so also in Russia the Jews were reproached for engaging only in commercial pursuits and neglecting agriculture entirely. They

therefore were nicknamed idlers, who preferred an easy trade and commerce to the arduous labors of the farmer, and exploited the agricultural population by their commercial tricks and usuries. But as everywhere, so also in Russia, those who reproach the Jews with these faults forget intentionally that it is not fifty years since the Jews were forbidden to settle where they would, and that the sad experience of eighteen centuries has taught them not to invest their fortunes in farms and real estate, since the avarice of kings and the fanaticism of the militant church continually drove them from their hearths and exiled them from every place where they thought they had found rest from their tiresome wanderings. Such a fear having taken hold of a people, it can not be removed by the stroke of the pen by any government. It takes years, yea, whole generations, before such a condition can be remedied. The Jew, constantly exposed to the danger of being driven away from his home, had to invest his means in such kind of property which he could carry away with him in case of expulsion, and therefore it was quite natural that he preferred commercial to agricultural pursuits.

The Secretary of the Imperial Treasury, Count Kankrin, perceiving the inability of the Jewish Russian population to pay the annual taxes, had proposed to the emperor a great many times to permit the Jews to settle as farmers in Siberia. The ukase had hardly been issued when a very large number of Jews applied for permission to go with their families thither. When Count Kankrin reported these applications to the emperor, he reconsidered his former resolution and refused to sign the necessary

documents. Siberia, the abode of the criminals, was thought too good for the poor Jews. These, however, in the meantime had sold their all, and deprived of all means of subsistence sank daily into an ever deeper abyss of misery. Encouraged by the imperial ukase, they believed that they would be dispatched to their new homes very soon. They made every possible preparation for their early departure and sold many of their possessions. The order for their departure not arriving, they were obliged to support themselves by their scanty means; these being soon exhausted, they were in a desperate state of poverty and despair. All their petitions to the government of Kurland remained unanswered; all their solicitations were of no avail. Month after month passed by and there was no spark of hope for these unfortunate ones.

At last the news arrived in Mitau that the emperor, on his journey to Germany, would pass that city, but traveling incognito, he had forbidden any ceremony of reception, wishing not to be molested by anyone. But a poor Jewish woman had resolved upon risking everything, and when the imperial carriage stopped at the postoffice, without caring for the gensdarmes and other officers, she approached the same and handed to the emperor her petition. Nicholas received it very graciously and, having read it through, he ordered the Cesarewitch Alexander, who was sitting near him, to take down a memorandum that the petition ought to be acted upon without delay. A few weeks afterwards an imperial decree was issued ordering the government of Kurland to make the necessary preparations at once and to dispatch the Jews into the new settlements which the emperor

had granted them in the southern government of Cherson. The joy of the poor Jews was intense; the day of their departure had been fixed, and the trustees celebrating it as a thanksgiving day had invited me to come into their midst and to conduct the solemn ceremonies of the day.

A deputation of the congregation came to accompany me to Mitau, and after a pleasant trip of a few hours I alighted at the house of the *Parnass,* Mr. Wagenheim, an old acquaintance of mine and a very well-educated man. I requested him to introduce me at once to the rabbi of the place, who, as I had already been informed in Riga, did not enjoy the highest reputation among his coreligionists. Nearly his whole family had embraced Christianity, and what wonder, therefore, that the congregation looked with suspicion upon their spiritual guide. He was known as a tricky, cunning man, and all kinds of rumors were afloat regarding his character. My colleague, the rabbi of Riga, being on the worst terms with him, tried to make him ridiculous whenever he could. Mr. Wagenheim introduced me to him, and having exchanged the usual compliments we discussed the program of the ceremony, which was to take place the next morning. Having agreed that the rabbi should recite the selected psalms and the prayer for the government and that I should deliver the sermon, I left his house remarking to the *Parnass*: "I am afraid that the rabbi will play us some tricks tomorrow; for being envious of my invitation I should not wonder if, as usual, he would cause some confusion". The *Parnass* tried his best to dispel my uneasy forebodings and I passed the evening in the company of

some very enlightened Jews, where I forgot the ceremony and all the preparations for it.

But already at five o'clock the next morning the *Parnass* entered my room. "I have just received a message from the rabbi", he addressed me, "to the effect that because of sickness he is unable to participate in the ceremony this morning".

"Did I not tell you that last evening"? I interrupted him. "The rabbi of Riga had warned me that we would have difficulties with your man and that he would delight in annoying us in every way possible. Why did I not propose another plan at once"? "Oh"! replied Mr. Wagenheim, "I think we can do very well without him; the *Chazan* of Szagarin having arrived this morning will recite these psalms".

"Yes, your Polish *Chazanim"*, I answered, "with their antiquated *Nigunim*,[25] what do they understand of a ceremony such as we are going to celebrate today? The Christian nobility whom we have invited will laugh at our Jewish taste when they hear the tasteless quavers and trills of your *Chazanim"*.

"This *Chazan* is an exception to the great majority. I will call him in, and I am sure you will form a better opinion of his talents after hearing him". The door having been opened, a young man some twenty years of age, of a very fine appearance, and cleanly clad in his Polish costume, entered the room and bowed deeply. "Are you able", I asked him still rather angrily, "to recite a psalm without using your Polish melodies"?

"Yes, sir", he answered; and beginning the one hundredth psalm, which was the first number on the program, he read it in such a masterly fashion that

[25] Tunes.

I could not help embracing him. He was one of the thousands amongst the Polish Jews who, naturally gifted, perform wonders as *Chazanim* without any musical training whatsoever. Guzikow, who, with his straw harmonica, aroused the greatest excitement in western Europe, is not the only master on this instrument. I met a great many more who, if favored by opportunities, would create the same musical furor. I met afterwards the *Chazan* of Vilna, who might have been accounted easily amongst the foremost living tenors of our age; whenever this young Polish Jew gave a concert in Warsaw the entire nobility constituted his audience, and sometimes even a countess or princess, whose pet he was, sat at the door to receive the money for him. I made the acquaintance of the *Chazan* of Minsk who, though not as fine as he of Vilna, played the violin very well, and astonished his congregation every Sabbath with new, masterly compositions. The *Chazan* of Odessa, quite a young man, had established a choir that would do honor to any metropolis, and, being an eminent musician, his compositions were considered by Sulzer as good as any in the unsurpassed *Shir Zion*.[26] And lastly, I knew a man, a coppersmith by trade, who read the service only on New Year's Day and on the Day of Atonement, and who was paid exorbitant prices by any congregation for whom he consented to officiate during these holy days. I never heard a finer voice and never witnessed a service read with more devotion than wherever the coppersmith officiated. Of this stamp of men was the *Chazan* of Szagarin; and with an easy heart, a few

[26] The celebrated collection of synagogue music by Sulzer.

hours afterwards, we drove to the handsomely decorated synagogue.

The house was crowded to the utmost. The front ranks were occupied by the officers of the government, decorated with their numberless stars and ribbons; the left aisle was thronged by the members of the congregation, the right one by strangers and the families of the colonists. It was a pleasure to look at these poor creatures, whose features, beaming with joy, indicated that they really were thanking God and the emperor for seeing at last their anxious hopes and expectations fulfilled. The *Chazan,* with his sweet and manly voice, began to read the selected psalms; he had read only a few verses when every eye, even of the Christians, was full of tears. He captivated all his hearers, and not the nicest preludium on an organ could have prepared them better for the sermon than did his inspiring recitation. The text of the sermon was: "Those who sow with tears shall reap in joy". I expounded all the advantages the Jews would derive from the benefits granted to the Jews by Nicholas. The sermon made such a favorable impression that at the request of the highest officers present it was published and sent to all the members of the imperial family. Psalms and prayers concluded the service, a festival dinner the whole ceremony, and a most favorable report on the loyal and faithful sentiments of the Jews was forwarded to St. Petersburg.

The next morning I witnessed the departure of the colonists. It was heartrending to see how reluctantly they separated themselves from all that since their childhood had been dear to them; how here an old father, for the last time, embraced and blessed his

children; how there a good old mother, though prepared for months for this moment, would not separate herself from those who were dearer to her maternal heart than her own life; how on another side small children, not comprehending the importance of that day, rejoicing in the idea of traveling, jumped up and down about the carts. Ready to provide in any way and shape for the comfort of the poor travelers, the people presented gifts in abundance till at last the sign for the departure was given. Commissioners of the government had to accompany them; and after having pronounced the usual benediction over them all, and in a fervent prayer having recommended them to the protection of the all-kind Guardian of Israel, we took leave of them and saw them set out on their journey.

The preparations of the government, however, had not been sufficient to provide for all their wants on the exceedingly long journey. The time had been too short, the departure too hasty, and they had to endure great sufferings and privations on their way to Cherson. There things were not in the proper order, and the largest majority of the emigrants would have perished there but for the humanity and extraordinary exertions of the governor-general, Count Woronzoff, who did all in his power to alleviate their sufferings and to make their new home as comfortable as possible.

XIX.

Time rolled on, and though the treasury of my congregation was sometimes so depleted that we had to take up voluntary contributions in order to defray

the most urgent expenses, I passed my time very agreeably in my flourishing school and in a beloved circle of intimate friends. I had won the implicit confidence of the old rabbi and the members of the congregation. The improvements we had introduced in the service by regular German sermons, the Confirmation, etc., had banished all fear and apprehension, and happy, peaceable days seemed to be in store for me.

But towards the end of the year 1841 I received a communication, addressed to me by Prince Shirinski-Schichmatoff, the Director of the Department of Public Instruction, informing me that Mr. Nisan Rosenthal of Vilna, having represented to the minister the possibility of establishing another flourishing Jewish school in that city, His Excellency ordered me to accompany him thither as soon as Mr. Rosenthal would call on me, and then to report to him on the progress I had attained. A week afterwards Mr. Rosenthal, a modernized Polish Jew, a very handsome man, indeed, entered my room. He had just been decorated by the emperor with the golden medal for some services rendered to the crown, and tried, like the politicians in this country, to gain some distinction and to make a living by all kinds of schemes and plans. He stood not in the best graces of his coreligionists, being considered as one of the new lights or Berliners, as the reformers, adjudged to be the followers of Mendelssohn in Berlin, are called in Vilna. He was hated by the Poles, who considered him one of their secret enemies. Though disliking the man in whose company I had to start on my mission, I had to obey, and the next morning we left for Vilna.

With this departure from Riga began the second act of my drama in Russia. Till then I had passed my time in congregations in which the German element, having some preponderance, had exercised a benign influence. The rays of German Jewish culture, by the means of Philippson's *Zeitung des Judenthums,* had already penetrated into these distant abodes of Russia; and the German dress, the pure German language, the intercourse with the highly educated Christian citizens had quite prepared them for a mission such as mine was in Russia. But now I had to mingle with quite a different set of men. Some families in Vilna and Minsk excepted, who by reading Mendelssohn's translation of the Pentateuch, his and his pupils' *Biurim,*[27] or Brockhaus' *Lexicon* and the standard writers of Germany, had become more enlightened. I had to meet a million of such orthodox Jews as are totally unknown in Germany. Their language is the most corrupt jargon, intermixed with Russian and Polish words; their dress was entirely different from mine; their views and opinions dated centuries back; they were eminent masters in the Talmud and rabbinical literature, but totally ignorant of all other sciences or worldly affairs, full of prejudices and superstitions, and sunk into the fathomless abyss of wild, unintelligible, yea incredible beliefs. Great difficulties were in store for me, but I could only follow the star of my destiny and to await the things that were coming.

Having traveled all night, we alighted in the morning at the postoffice in the town of W——. The postmaster there, as in all the governments in which

[27] Commentaries.

the Jews are permitted to settle, was a Jew. He had nearly a hundred horses in his stable and seemed to be of good standing. But as the passports in every station have to be recorded, and this office not being entrusted to the Jews, but to Christian secretaries appointed everywhere for that purpose, I found also there a secretary inquiring for my passport, and was informed that the secretary was a Karaite. I felt grieved at this distinction made by the government between the Jews proper and the Karaites, and was informed by the postmaster that unfortunately the Karaites were more trusted by the government than the Jews and that the hatred and the suspicion between these two classes were intense; that the government, by favoring the Karaites intended merely to allure the large number of the Russian Jews[28] into Karaism, but that as soon as this purpose was attained the Karaites would be treated as mercilessly as the Jews were at present.

While my companion was taking breakfast and indulging in conversation with some Jewish merchants, I hurried out to look at the town. I never before had witnessed such a large number of Jews to almost the entire exclusion of the Christians. Wherever I looked, out of every corner, out of every house there came Jews, some with their *Talith* and *Tefilin*[29] returning from the *Beth Hamidrash*,[30] others hurrying to their business, most of them earnest, gloomy faces, absorbed in their various thoughts and occupations. The place had an aspect of rather an en-

[28] In contrasting Jews with Karaites here and elsewhere, Dr. Lilienthal means "rabbinic Jews".

[29] Phylacteries.

[30] House of study.

tirely Jewish town than of a Christian city. But the carriage awaited me, and on it went, without delay, through a great many more cities of this kind, till on Tuesday evening we alighted at a Jewish hotel in Vilna.

Vilna, even in Poland, is called עיר ואם בישראל, the metropolis of Israel! And when Napoleon I, on a Friday afternoon in 1812, having entered the gates of this city rode through its streets he exclaimed to his marshals: "Gentlemen, I think we are in Jerusalem". Coming from Germany, where in all the cities the Jews are in the minority, entirely disappearing amongst the larger majority of their Christian fellow citizens, I did not know what to make out of this swarming beehive of Jews. I, too, believed myself to be in Palestine instead of in Russia, so entirely and thoroughly Jewish appeared to me the city of Vilna. Vilna had at that time some thirty thousand Jews, and two-thirds of them, I suppose, are continually in the streets, hunting after a poor living. All the numerous stores belong to Jews; the women tend to that business, and their black raven eyes spy anxiously for customers. Lively and endowed with a commercial spirit, they talk and discuss zealously and earnestly their business speculations, and the shrewdest man finds a match in them. The men are more engaged in outdoor business, in large enterprises, and with their large cloaks over their *Schubetze,* you see them restlessly and continually moving to and fro. There is no trade which is not almost entirely in the hands of the Jews. I remembered the different imperial and royal decrees of western Europe encouraging the Jews to dedicate themselves to the different trades, recollected the

many Jewish societies established for the same purpose, and recalled the wholesale accusations I had heard in St. Petersburg that the Jews were idlers, were peddlers and hucksters; here I found just the contrary—practical, actual life, refuting all these calumnies. At every new building there were Jewish masons and carpenters working as hard and skillfully as the best mechanics in Germany. There was no difficult trade whatever, as coppersmiths, etc., which was not practiced by the Jews; and the lighter ones, as tailors and shoemakers, were so overcrowded that a poor fellow working day and night hardly could make a living. I was told that there are over two thousand tailors and shoemakers in the city of Vilna alone, which can not possibly support such a host of competitors. Cartmen and day laborers are Jews, and all other businesses of this kind requiring athletic, powerful men are in the hands of the Israelites, It was indeed a strange experience to see the mass of these men who, in the midst of their toil and moil, always had their head covered with their leathern or velvet *Jarmeke* (cap) and their body adorned with the enormously long *Arba Kanfoth*. I was dumbfounded. It seemed to me as if I were the god Janus of old, endowed with two faces, the one looking forth into the time of our civilized age, the other looking back into the remote centuries of the middle ages. With open eyes I seemed to dream, and it required some time before I became familiar with that new spectacle.

XX.

On Thursday night an assembly of the representatives of the congregation was convened in order to hear the propositions I had to make to them by order of the government. A committee led me into the vestry, where I found some hundred men assembled, all dressed in their *Schubetze* and their fur caps. I felt so lonesome in the midst of these strange faces —the only *Datschel* in the crowd of Polish Jews. The president of the congregation, a wealthy man, but of a very insignificant appearance, a great Talmudist, but without any other education, who, on account of his riches and his fanatically orthodox ideas exercised a great influence, welcomed me in the name of the illustrious congregation, gave me his chair, and requested me to state the purpose of my visit with which I had honored them.

I stated to the meeting that my visit was of no official character. They were well aware that the emperor had appointed a special committee of ministers to take into consideration the affairs of the Jews from a religious as well as from a political and educational point of view, that the imperial government was determined upon introducing a wholesome change and that its intentions could not be eluded this time. Minister Uwaroff, a friend of the Jews, had ordered me to tell my coreligionists that they should not let the opportunity presented to them escape as they had done in the time of the late Emperor Alexander, when the delegates called to the capital were dismissed with the greatest disgrace to themselves as well as to their constituents; that His Excellency wished the Jews to establish schools in

accordance with the spirit of the time and the demands of the age before the government would order and compel them to do so. By such a procedure they would dispose the government in their favor, and being aware what an immense influence the Jewish metropolis of Vilna exercised upon the Russian Jews in general, he hoped that by setting a glorious example they would take the whole matter into their hands, thereby becoming the benefactors and regenerators of their race.

I had been listened to silently. The younger generation in Vilna, imbued with the progressive spirit of our age and well versed in the Hebrew, Russian, Polish, German and partly French languages, were enthused by my short address; they hoped to see their favorite dreams and hopes fulfilled at last. They said, "Now the time has come in which a German book will not be called any more a טרפה פסול,[32] and its students ignominious heretics. A better morning is dawning; the *Schubetze* will be done away with; we will support the propositions of the doctor enthusiastically; we will accept and uphold them without any conditions whatever."

But the elders sat there absorbed in deep contemplation. Some of them, leaning on their silver-adorned staffs or smoothing their long beards, seemed as if agitated by earnest thoughts and justifiable suspicions; others were engaging in a lively but quiet discussion on the principles involved; such put to me the ominous question: "Doctor, are you fully acquainted with the leading principles of our government? You are a stranger; do you know what you

[32] An unclean, forbidden thing.

are undertaking? The course pursued against all denominations but the Greek proves clearly that the government intends to have but one church in the whole empire; that it has in view only its own future strength and greatness and not our own future prosperity. We are sorry to state that we put no confidence in the new measures proposed by the ministerial council, and that we look with gloomy foreboding into the future".

"I am well aware of your apprehensions", I answered the respectable old man who had been the interpreter of the feelings of the gray-headed and silver-bearded assembly, "and was well informed of all that is going on during my sojourn in Riga. The question we have to consider is this: Can we avoid the threatening danger by the useless answer that we do not want to have anything to do with it? I am convinced that the Jewish affairs are now in such hands, that they surely will be acted upon. What will we gain by a wilful resistance? We will draw the dissatisfaction of the government upon ourselves, will provoke justifiable ill feeling and merely expose ourselves to dangers still more discouraging. I have pondered upon this subject carefully; but after mature and serious consideration I have found it best to take this matter at once in our hands, and having established schools according to our plans, our means and under our own superintendency, we will anticipate the measures of the government. By thus presenting our intentions and views in a favorable light, I entertain not the least doubt that our schools will be sanctioned and our plans ratified by the department of public instruction".

"But what guarantee", asked another gentleman,

"can you offer us that our religion will not be encroached upon"?

"Gentlemen", I replied, "born in Russia, you know a great deal better than I that I am unable to offer you any guarantee on the part of the department. The emperor's will reigns supreme and autocratic; he can recall today what he has promised yesterday; he changes his officers and their systems whenever he pleases. How should I, an humble stranger, be able to offer you a guarantee? I am not empowered to do it. All that I can promise you as your co-religionist is that I shall not go a step further in promoting the plans of the government before having obtained the assurance that nothing will be undertaken against our holy religion, that I shall lay down my office as soon as I shall become convinced of the contrary, and that no offense on the part of my brethren shall excuse me for breaking this promise I am giving you in this solemn hour."

This assurance was received with general satisfaction. Some of the members present hurried up to me and shook my hands heartily; others welcomed me in the most friendly manner, and the confidence and good understanding seemed to be restored. "He is an honest *Datschel,*" remarked one. "I have heard of him in Riga," said another. "He enjoys the reputation of a good, pious Jew; he is right," observed a third. "We must accept cheerfully this disagreeable news; useless resistance will only make matters worse." Thus the observations continued, till one of the trustees asked me: "But doctor, there is another consideration. In Germany, where they have neglected the study of the Talmud these past thirty years, and have indulged in the study of all kinds

of profane sciences, our Jewish religion has been sadly wronged, the ties of the heavenly yoke have been loosened; the old respect for our sacred ordinances is gone, and many of our brethren have embraced Christianity. Is it not in the interest of our creed to keep away from all these innovations, to adhere to our ancient mode of life, to educate our children as we have been educated, finding in the past a safer guarantee for our existence than in present innovations?"

"My dear friend," I replied to him, "the wheels of progressive time can not be stopped by man's frail hands. In Germany also the ancient usages reigned with universal, omnipotent sway; but the new ideas nevertheless found their way into the secluded and hidden abodes of the Jews. The old rabbis condemned and excommunicated Mendelssohn and his undertaking, and instead of reconciling the new views with the demands of our creed, they looked either with indifference and contempt or with grief and inactive pity at the change that went on under their eyes. We must not follow their example. We must try to anticipate the injurious consequences by uniting the most intense love and obedience to our faith with the demands of life. This, however, is a topic whose discussion we can not finish this evening, but I am ready to discuss that subject with you whenever you may find it convenient. This evening I wish only to know without intruding upon your earnest consideration how you receive the communication I had to make, and what I shall report to St. Petersburg."

The *Parnass* assured me that as far as he knew the views of his board I might be sure of fair suc-

cess, that Vilna would come up to the expectations entertained by the department; that without delay they would take the establishment of a large school into earnest consideration, and would inform me of their resolutions as soon as they would have agreed upon a plan. We separated with the best feelings, and when we came down the stairs the *Shamashim*[33] took me upon their shoulders and carried me in triumph to my carriage, which was surrounded by my young Jewish friends of Vilna.

On Friday morning I hurried to pay my visit to the chief rabbi of Vilna, Rev. Israel Gordon. Vilna has two Jewish courts (*Beth Din*), in which *Din Thora*[1] is still practiced, and where daily a great many lawsuits are decided. Besides there are twelve other rabbis deciding all the religious questions, but Mr. Gordon is acknowledged by the government as the official rabbi using the crown's seal and signing all the official papers. When the government began to meddle with the congregational affairs some of the rabbis of old standing refused to accept the office of "government rabbi," being afraid of the vexations of the greedy officers, and men more acquainted with the worldly affairs were elected as the "crown rabbis," while the old ones attended to the different religious duties. But Mr. Gordon combined in his person both charges, and commanded universal love and esteem on account of the rectitude and amiability of his character. I was ushered into his presence as soon as I entered the dwelling and found him to be a stout, majestic man some fifty years of age. He spoke a pure German fluently, and quite up

[33] Sextons.

[1] Jewish law.

to the demands of the time. He congratulated me on my mission, wished me every possible success, and though confessing that his influence in the Board of Trustees was very limited, he would do for me whatever was in his power. I left him fully assured that I had found in the rabbi a warm friend of my cause.

When I left it was Friday afternoon; the Sabbath was coming. What a grand change was now taking place in the aspect of the Jewish metropolis!

XXI.

It was Friday afternoon; the bustle in the city seemed to increase; almost the whole population was busy, buying, selling, hurrying to and fro as if the end of the world were at hand. There a host of men hurried into the baths and soon afterwards appeared cleanly clad, the *Peos* and the beard all wet. There the women were busy in closing up their stores and preparing everything for the sales of next Saturday night. The mechanics packed up their tools repairing in all haste to their homes; the cartmen drove their horses into their stables, and the merchants with grave countenances retired to their families inspired with quite other thoughts than those engaging them in the course of the week. The city continued to become more and more calm, and I prepared to visit the Jewish Cathedral, the chief synagogue amongst a hundred minor ones with which Vilna is overfilled.

This synagogue, a mighty and grand structure, stands on the *Schulhof* in a circle of ten or twelve

Klausen.[34] There we see the *Klaus* of the *Gaon* Rabbi Elijahu Vilna, in which that pious and eminent scholar was used to pass his time in study and devotion. At the time of my visit a *Minyan*[35] of poor *Lamdanim*[36] was still hired to say there their prayers, and to study therein the law day and night. Even today the reforms he introduced are strictly observed; no prayer mentions the cabalistical names of angels; no *Machzor*[37] is recited there; and the service is carried on in the same way as if the *Gaon* was alive. Nearby are other *Klauses* instituted by different legacies, and the *Kaddish* for the pious testators is said morning and evening by a poor *Lamdan,* who supports his destitute family by the remuneration paid to him out of the interest of the legacy. There stands the great *Yeshibah,* instituted by the earnings of a chimney-sweeper, who, being childless and living very economically with his pious better half, bequeathed his whole large fortune for the support of an institution in which some two hundred pupils were instructed in all the branches of Talmudical literature and prepared for the rabbinical chair. And in the midst of these and a great many other synagogues stood the magnificent temple, the *Hauptschul* of Vilna.

It had been built originally by the Karaites with all the exquisite taste and splendor, that distinguish the synagogues of this sect. But when they were driven away from Vilna the synagogue was handed

[34] Small synagogues, frequently private; often used as houses of study.

[35] Congregation of ten men.

[36] Learned men.

[37] Book of Set Prayers.

over to the Jews. It is at least some seventy feet high and of vast dimensions. I was struck with awe and reverence upon entering the dark and gloomy vaults surrounding the majestic edifice. It was as if the past centuries of Jewish history were greeting me. It was as if they themselves, used to seeing only the costume and dress of the fourteenth century were astonished to perceive a modern Jewish stranger in their midst. In comparison with the past which these gloomy walls have witnessed, I appeared to myself so little and so insignificant. Quite another feeling overpowers one here than that which seizes one when entering our newly built synagogues. Here it is the hope of the future that smilingly encourages us in loyalty to our sacred creed; there it is the past with its horrible pangs and agonies that asks us: "Will you not laugh at our sufferings? Will you not become faithless to that eternal truth for which we have sacrificed blood and treasure?" Upon entering I said in the words of the Patriarch Jacob, "Truly this is the house of God and this is the gate of heaven."

An immense staircase led down into the interior of the temple, the railings of which were adorned with innumerable brass boxes, receiving the offerings for the many charitable institutions. Even the poorest man who, in the course of the whole week, has saved but one penny, offers his mite upon the altar of charity and benevolence, for *Zedakah*[38] is still practiced today as the chief of all the laws, and no one would consider himself as having fulfilled his religious duties without giving *Zedakah*. Having descended this staircase you reach the lower end of the

[38] Charity.

synagogue and have a full view of the majestic building. Three mighty galleries for the women, one above the other, run through the whole length of the southern, western and northern aisles of the synagogue and accommodate on the holidays several thousand women. In the middle of the building stands the *Bimah* covered by a richly ornamented roof, which is supported by four marble pillars running up to the very height of the ceiling; the table plate, upon which the Torah is laid, is of pure massive silver—an old legacy. On the east side is the holy ark, consisting of three stories, in which the numberless *Sephorim*[39] are kept, and to which leads an ornamental staircase outside of the ark. It is beautified with rich carvings, splendidly gilded or painted, and with an immense curtain covering the doors of the ark. This curtain, a few years before my arrival, caught fire on *Yom Kippur,* and several women were crushed to death in the panic that ensued. The pews, old-fashioned "standers," crowd the floor of the synagogue, which on the holidays contains from twenty-six hundred to three thousand male worshipers. In olden times the first four lines of pews near to the ark could be occupied but by *Morenus,* eminent Talmudical scholars, and there is still shown the pew of the celebrated Shabbatai Cohn, who was *Parnass* in Vilna, and of other eminent men.

I was shown by one of the numerous sextons to a seat near that of Rabbi Gordon, who, however, very seldom visits the synagogue, making *Minjan* in his own house like all the rabbis of old. The service was not very well attended, everyone on Friday night

[39] Scrolls of the law.

preferring to visit the synagogue next to his dwelling. The synagogue was richly illuminated with wax candles; the celebrated *Chazan,* of whom mention has been made above, officiated with his assistants in a most edifying manner, and having received many a hearty "Good *Shabbos,*" I left more than pleased with the service.

When I reentered the streets all was still and quiet. For the first time in my life I had an idea of a Sabbath as celebrated by our ancestors in the holy land in times of yore. Heaven and earth, moon and stars, houses and streets all preached: "It is the Sabbath, the day consecrated by the Lord." All the stores were closed; no cart was moving in the street; a holy tranquility reigned everywhere. The men excepted, who returned from the service, no person was to be seen in the wide and empty streets. The high five-story houses were illuminated from the deep cellar up to the garret rooms. It was as if the whole city had put on its holiday attire to receive in a dignified manner the heavenly bride of the Sabbath. I stood full of amazement in the midst of this spectacle, sunk in deep revery, disturbed only now and then by a "Good *Shabbos*" addressed to me by the men who passed by and quickly disappeared into their different houses.

I followed some of them, and through the cleft of a window shutter looked into the front room anxious to observe how the Sabbath was celebrated in the circle of these families.

How clean, how tidy looked this room! The floor, neatly scrubbed, was strewn with sand; the walls were adorned with many lighted candlesticks; in the middle of the room stood a large table covered with

snow white linen on which were several pairs of *Chalos* (Sabbath-bread) and a bottle of wine with several silver cups. In one nook of the room in a large leathern armchair sat the grandmother, the head covered with a gold embroidered cap, the breast adorned with a kind of richly gilded shield; she played with a little grandson sitting on her lap. The mother, the head covered with a turban, and the neck adorned with a golden chain and medals, sat with folded arms engaged in a quiet conversation with one of her daughters-in-law. All were nicely dressed and sat around the walls; the married ones had their hair hidden beneath the turban; the single ones showed their long, raven black tresses. They waited for their husbands, and none would dare to disturb the holy peace of the Sabbath by loud conversation before the men had returned with the sweet and charming greeting of a "Good *Shabbos*."

XXII.

At last the door opened and there came in the grandfather, the father, his sons and sons-in-law. The ladies rose and welcomed them with a friendly and hearty "Good *Shabbos*" as if they had not seen them for a long time, or as if on Sabbath they were quite other men, not engaged in worldly pursuits, but entirely prepared to enjoy the pleasures of a sweet home and the blessings of a happy family. The grandfather, a man of some fifty years of age, after having greeted the angels of Sabbath with the usual *Shalom Alechem*[40] first approached the table to say

[40] "Peace be unto you", the usual word of greeting.

Kiddush. His wife, rising from her seat, came near him, and while he was shaking his whole body in reciting the prayer she, standing with folded arms, answered with sincere devotion the "Amen," which was encored by all the members of the family. Then came the father, who performed in the same manner the holy ceremony. Then came the turn of all the married sons and sons-in-law, each of whom went with his wife to his place at the large family table reciting the blessing. After a short conversation they took their seats for supper, and the tranquility, the inward satisfaction, the peace of mind that reigned in the whole circle, made a most favorable and lasting impression on me.

I hurried home, and having partaken of my meal I again went into the streets to see what was going on. It was quiet, very quiet, everywhere; but here and there I perceived a few men going to pay a visit to their relations. I again looked through the windows into the rooms where many men were singing their *Semiroth,* or engaged in a friendly conversation either with the members of their families or with some visitors. All had a different appearance—the gloomy, care-worn faces had disappeared; everybody seemed reconciled with his God and the troubles of life; the mitigating hand of religion had laid its balm upon the woes of wounded hearts; the agonies of the past and the cares of the future seemed to be forgotten; confidence in the ever-living God of Israel, in his kindness and bounty having taken their place, all enjoyed the presence and the blessings of religion.

But soon the lights began to be extinguished. While passing several houses I perceived wife and

children already asleep, but the men still sitting over a Hebrew book, enjoying the study of a commentary of the chapter read on the following morning. Half an hour more and Vilna, that beehive of Jews, being quiet and still, I returned to my hotel really delighted with the spectacle I had witnessed for the first time, and with the holiness with which the Sabbath is still kept among our coreligionists in Russia. On Sabbath morning I again visited the synagogue, then overcrowded. Before the *Sepher Torah* was taken out I was invited to leave the synagogue and to come into one of the adjoining rooms. It being impossible that even in the course of a whole year all the visitors of that mighty building should be called to the reading of the law, the members of the different benevolent societies leave the service before *Keriath Hatorah*[41] and read the *Parasha* in one of the many adjoining rooms to their members. They are very jealous of their privileges and it is considered a high honor to be invited to the reading of a *Parasha*. The oldest *Chebrah*[42] of Vilna honoring me with such a distinguished invitation I began to hope for the success of my mission.

Service being finished, I was introduced to the *Stadt-Magid*[43] of Vilna, who attended the synagogue regularly. He was a man of some sixty years, of high stature and kindly expression. He welcomed me very heartily. He was greatly beloved in Vilna for his talents as *Magid* as well as for the sincerity of his character and his practical views. He invited me to his residence, where I found a select company

[41] The reading of the Pentateuchal portion.

[42] Society.

[43] Chief Preacher.

waiting for the *Torah* (explanation of the law), which the *Magid* was used to say every morning after the service. There was no comfortable dwelling, no richly furnished rooms, no elegant furniture; through the dark vaults of an unclean entrance I was led to a kind of a cellar, the study chamber of the *Magid*. The black walls were all covered with shelves, filled with a costly and large library; an old couch standing in a corner was the resting place of the pious man; an old oak table and a few second-hand wooden chairs were all the furniture of this chamber. He offered me a chair and a place at the table, and having made *Kiddush*, he treated his guests with some spicy and witty explanations of the *Sidrah*.[44] Having remarked to me that he would preach as usual in the afternoon at half-past three o'clock, he was pleased with the promise of my attendance and dismissed me in a friendly, patriarchial manner.

How lively the streets were when we left the *Magid's* house! Men and women, dressed in costly Sabbath attire, returned in large crowds from the different synagogues. The servants, handsome black-eyed girls, were seen running to and fro carrying the Sabbath meals and engaged in lively conversation. The fine turbans over their raven-black tresses, their eyes beaming with joy and satisfaction, it appeared as if the handsome youth of Vilna would now take possession of the city. But also this picture soon vanished and the streets again became quiet and still.

After the meal the men slept. I perceived at the windows old grandmothers in the circle of the ladies

[44] The Pentateuchal section of the week.

of their family reading with tears and devotion the *Zeenah-Ureenah*[45] or some other work of this stamp, to which the daughters listened attentively and showed much interest in a story they had heard already twenty times before. At another window I saw fathers with their young children examining them in the lessons of the past week and rewarding with apples and candies those with whom they seemed satisfied. The little boys in their small *Schubetze,* their fur caps and their long curly *Peos* seemed as happy as kings, and when the *Melammed*[46] recommended one of them as likely to become a "light in Israel" the young scholar walked away proudly and with a dignified earnestness and manliness quite unknown to the Jewish youth of Germany.

XXIII.

At half-past three in the afternoon I hurried into the large synagogue which I had visited in the morning, in order to be present at the sermon of the friendly *Magid.* I found there an immense gathering. All classes, from the rich merchant to the poor woodcutter, were fairly represented, and all of them seemed versed enough in Talmudical knowledge to understand the very clever and ingenious explanations of the pious preacher. The sermon lasted a full hour, and I was informed that in all the one hundred synagogues of Vilna at the same hour, appointed *Magidim* preached before numerous audiences, the *Derashah* being a true relish for the Jews after their tiresome exertions of the whole week.

[45] A volume containing many legends and stories; the favorite book of devotion of Jewish women in earlier days.

[46] Teacher.

After *Minchah*[47] prayer the whole Jewish population went out walking till sunset. Out of all the synagogues the noisy multitude, men and women, boys and girls, strolled into the outskirts and the fields bordering on the city. It is the only time during the whole week that Jews allow themselves some recreation. On weekdays everyone being engaged in the different pursuits for making a living, he finds no leisure and would consider it a sinful loss of time to take a walk; but on Sabbath after *Minchah* almost everyone enjoys the refreshing balm of the beautiful meadows, though the Russian Jew is no admirer of nature's beautiful scenery. I mingled with the crowd in order to witness this amusing spectacle. I admired the exceedingly handsome girls accompanying their parents, and willingly acknowledged the truth of the report of all travelers in Russia, that the Russian and Polish Jewesses may fairly be numbered amongst the handsomest of women. Certainly they are not possessed of that charming grace and refined polish which education adds to natural beauty; but nature has favored them with all charms that may be called attractive. A fair *teint,* raven-black eyes and hair, a Juno-like figure, small hands and feet, ivory teeth, a fiery temper and great mental endowments distinguish the Jewish women in Russia. One of the beauties of the age was Mrs. Rafaelowitch in Mogilef Podlisk! Nicholas when seeing her exclaimed, "Eto Cracaweza, that is a beauty, indeed." The fairest among the fair ones I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with in Russia were Miss Taube Rosenthal, Miss Jock, Miss Klaczko in Vilna and Mrs. Bernstein in

[47] Afternoon service.

Odessa. King Louis of Bavaria, a good judge of woman's beauty, would certainly have added their pictures to the gallery of beauties which he had gathered in his royal mansion in Munich. They were a true personification of the sweet *Sulamith,* whom King Solomon describes in his Song of Songs. The Russian women in general being very ugly, the Jewish women form a highly favorable contrast.

But the stars began to twinkle on the bright horizon. "The Sabbath is out" was the universal remark, and a quarter of an hour afterwards Vilna had put off its festival attire, and care and trouble and anxiety took hold again of every mind and every heart. The stores were opened, and the women tended to their business; the men ran to and fro again in the dark and deep night in order to continue and to conclude the business left unfinished on Friday; the boys even had to study their lessons, and in all the *Jeshiboth*[48] and *Bothe Midrashim*[49] the old study was resumed with renewed zeal and ardor.

The trustees of the congregation being rather slow in the consideration of the important subject I had laid before them, I employed my leisure time in making myself better acquainted with the life of my Russian coreligionists. Having been informed that one of the *Magidim* had lectured in my favor on Saturday afternoon in one of the synagogues, having recommended my mission in the most impressive terms to his hearers, I hastened to pay him my visit and to thank him for his courtesy. Rabbi R—— was considered one of the greatest *Lamdanim* and

[48] Academies.

[49] Houses of study.

Magidim in Vilna, a man of unusual mildness of character, of indubitable piety and disinterestness.

After some inquiry I found the house where the rabbi lived. I had to stoop down in a miserable cellar, and was horror-struck when I entered it. In such an abode of misery and poverty such eminence and learning, such a character of true piety! A damp and moist atmosphere, humid, cold and gloomy walls, a long shelf filled with Hebrew books, an old table with two common wooden chairs—that was the study of the old rabbi, that the room in which he passed day and night in reading the Scriptures and the Talmud. He welcomed me, and inviting me to take a seat at the table covered with a heap of Hebrew books I could hardly forbear weeping when I sat down and looked into the glorified face of the holy man. While engaged in lively conversation a water carrier very poorly dressed entered the room, and putting down a large pail of fresh water, he said: "Good morning, rabbi; here is your water," and kissing with sincere devotion the *Mezuzah* he immediately left the room. "Who is that man?" I asked the rabbi. "He is one of the thousand good men in this city," he answered, "who make a scanty living by carrying water. He is something of a *Lamdan* too, and knowing that I am poor and unable to pay a water carrier he brings me every morning my water for nothing, firmly convinced that *Shimush Talmide Chachamim*[50] is a great virtue. You can find him every evening in the *Beth Hamidrash*, where after having provided scantily for the wants of his family he listens to a lecture on *Midrash*." "Is the number of paupers very large in your city?" "Oh,

[50] The service of the learned.

my dear friend, you have no idea of how poorly our brethren are living! There are a great many who live the whole week on bread, potatoes and some tea. The wealthier ones bake every Friday a number of small loaves, which they distribute among the indigent, in order that they, too, may be enabled to celebrate the Sabbath!" I kept silent, for such poverty, such depressing misery is unknown amongst our brethren in western Europe, and my heart bled when the idea suggested itself to my mind that the rabbi himself perhaps was living such a life of agony. Therefore, while engaging him in some Talmudical debate, during which he had to go for books, I laid three rubles silver under one of the open *Gemaras,*[51] that he might find them after my leaving his house, for I had not the courage to offer him alms. But what was my astonishment the next day when the rabbi called at my house with the intention of handing me back the three rubles silver, though, as he very reluctantly confessed, he was very poor, yet he was not used to accept alms. I assured him that I did not know anything of the money; that I had not laid it under the book, where he had found it; that it was not mine, and that I could not accept it. Tears trickled down his pale cheeks when he put the money back into his pocket, and with fervent blessing he left my room deeply affected.

XXIV.

On Monday morning I received an order from the department of public instruction, signed by the director, Prince Shirinski Schichmatoff, to visit all

[51] Another name for the Talmud.

Ordered to visit

the Hebrew schools in Vilna, and to report thereon after my return to Riga. I informed the *Parnass* of this ministerial order, and wished him to fix a day for my visit. He appointed Thursday, and when I expressed to some of my friends my astonishment at this unnecessary delay, I was informed that an order from headquarters had been issued by the *Parnass* to all the rabbis to send their pupils to the public baths to be cleaned in order that I might not be disgusted with the usual aspect and might be enabled to make a favorable report to the department.

On Thursday morning after divine service a committee, including the *Parnass*, called on me to accompany me to the different schools. I told them that I wished to begin with the lower ones, and to finish my official visit in the highest ones. They brought me, therefore, to some *Dardeke Chedarim*. These were long, spacious square rooms on the first floor, whose ceilings were not very high, whose walls were more black than white. Long tables were standing along the walls, surrounded by very common benches upon which sat the poor children, sometimes numbering one hundred and more. The number of teachers, with hungry, emaciated faces, amounted to four or five. All were teaching at once, so that the noise and confusion made by teachers and pupils were insufferable. At a table in the midst of the room sat the principal, and the rod—the supreme ruler of this little empire—was lying by his side. The air we inhaled when entering the room was damp, warm and unhealthy, and I pitied the little creatures who were forced to pass the gay and joyful days of childhood in such an abode. The teach-

ers, having been informed of my visit, were dressed in their Sabbath attire. After they had greeted me with the usual *Shalom Alechem,* I began to inquire concerning the subjects of tuition. I was told that the children begin to learn here the reading of the prayers and some *Chumesh;*[52] that they visit the school daily from nine to one and from three to six o'clock; that those learning *Chumesh* have to translate some chapters of the Law read on the next Sabbath; that the punishment consists in the use of the rod, and someone of the friends accompanying me remarked that in some of these *Chedarim* it is customary to give the boys some lashes on Friday afternoon before being dismissed on account of the mischief they will commit on the Sabbath. The school money paid to teachers varies according to the different subjects the child is taught, the qualities of the teacher and the financial circumstances of the parents. And it must be acknowledged that even the poorest class make any sacrifice by pawning even the trifles they possess to raise the required money. For even the poorest Polish or Russian Jew can not conceive the idea of raising his children without giving them some religious instruction. It being still considered the greatest honor and distinction to be a renowned Talmudist, every father aspires to that glory which is closed to nobody. Therefore in these *Chedarim* children are found of all classes, the rich as well as the poor, and the old Talmudical proverb, "Mind the children of the poor, for the Law comes forth from them," holds full sway in Russia.

After having examined some of those schools—

[52] Pentateuch.

all of which are conducted on the same system—we went to the *Yeshibah,* which is divided into five large rooms, and which numbered at the time of my visit over two hundred scholars. An old staircase led us up to the second story, where the lower classes were assembled. They are called *Irbuwia* (mixture), and there some *Chumesh* and *Gemarah* is taught. The boys, when I entered the room, were rocking their bodies and *Peos* over their *Gemarahs,* and while continuing the peculiar mode of singing that accompanies the Talmudical study, they squinted at the strange intruder who dared to disturb them. The rabbis were convened soon and the principal greeting me with hypocritical friendship expressed his readiness to show me through the different departments of this establishment. He told me that the *Yeshibah* had been founded by the legacy of a chimney sweeper, who, having no children, bequeathed his all to this holy institution, where yearly on the anniversary of his death *Kaddish* is said for his and his pious wife's soul by one of the orphan boys in the school. Upon my inquiry concerning the subjects of tuition he told me that the boys ranging from ten to twelve years of age are instructed in this class in *Chumesh,* but more particularly in *Gemarah,* and that the Talmudical chapters treating of the civil law are taught, they being the most fitted to sharpen the intellectual faculties of the youngsters. They visit the school from morning till eight and nine o'clock in the evening, and every Friday a strict examination is held in the lessons of the week, so that on Saturday afternoon, when examined by their parents, they may do credit to the school and themselves.

In the next room the study of the *Chumesh* is already laid aside, and the *Leienen,* the self-study of certain lessons of the Talmud, begins. The commentaries of *Tosephoth,*[53] *Mcharsho*[54] and others are added to the plain reading of the Talmudical text, and the scholar is initiated into the labyrinth of the *Pilpul.*[55]

In the higher classes called *Halacha Tosephoth* the students are kept day and night at their folio volumes, sometimes not undressing for a whole week and sleeping only a few hours on their hard benches. This whole system of Talmudical instruction is still carried on with that same intense religious spirit that distinguished it in former times. Disregarding the value of all worldly sciences, considering the *Torah* and the numberless commentators the acme of all human wisdom, sincerely convinced that this exclusive study not only beautifies this life, but prepares the immortal spirit for all the blessings and honors in store for the Israelite in the future life; day and night, under the greatest privations, are dedicated to this study that in their eyes outweighs all the pleasures and attractions of this world. The father believes that owing to the eminent position his son will occupy some day as a Talmudical scholar a better seat in Paradise is awaiting him. The mother, ready to bring every sacrifice for the instruction of her darling, passes her days in the sweet consolation that the *Kaddish* her pious son will

[53] "Additions." A commentary to the Talmud by celebrated rabbis of France of the twelfth century, notably Rabbenu Tam, Isaac ben Meir and Solomon ben Meir.

[54] Samuel Eliezer ben Judah Edeles (1555-1631).

[55] Dialectical casuistry.

say for her some time, will deliver her departed soul from all the pangs of *Gehinom,*[56] and raise her to the highest degree of beatitude. The son spending the best years of his hopeful youth over the folio volumes, feels himself superior to man's frail fate, and looks down with pride and self-respect on the insignificant occupations of men engaged in the transient and perishable business of everyday life. The whole nation, by this arduous study, feeling themselves still faithful to the Eternal One and his eternal law, do not mind the laws of exclusion and the slights they experience at every step. Their books tell them of a brilliant future that will compensate them richly for all the sufferings they are enduring. The satisfaction that the Talmudical study with all its ingenuity, acuteness and sophistry affords to the mind, besides the continual mental and moral improvement is an amusement that the Russian Jew prefers to all the glittering and transient entertainments of the most fashionable circles.

Here is the yawning chasm that separates the Russian and all the Oriental Jews from their western brethren! They consider a German book still a טרפה פסול ;[57] they regard the products of civilization as incompatible with and dangerous to religion, and though they sigh in their exclusion for redemption and long for the final fulfilment of Messianic promises, they feel an inward happiness with which only religion and confidence in Divine Providence can fill our hearts and our minds. We sons of western civilization can not comprehend this association of ideas. We love, revere and cultivate science,

[56] Hell.

[57] An unclean, forbidden thing.

claim our share in the active drama of life, and congratulate ourselves for being allowed to participate in the progress the human race is making in every direction. They study the Talmud because it is the spirit and aim of their life; not in order to know and to use this knowledge for ulterior purposes, but because the Torah is its sole object and end, without any further consideration whatever. We study the rabbinical literature because we wish to dig out the scientific treasures hidden and unexplained in these literary pyramids of old; because we intend to use the results of our investigation either for the consolidation of orthodoxy, or the construction of reform, or to add our share to the immense stores that science is gathering from everywhere. They study with their heart, with sincere love and respect for religion; we study with our mind, coolly dissecting the most tender fibres of religious life. While they feel blissfully happy we speculate with killing indifference.

Oh, when will the glorious day begin to dawn on which science and religion, elevating mankind to its destiny, will celebrate their mutual reconcilation?

XXV.

In the afternoon I visited the elementary school established by Messrs. Klatzcko and Rosenthal. What a mighty contrast to the dark and dirty *Chedarim* I had visited in the forenoon! Large, clean and commodious stairs led to fine apartments in which some eighty to ninety children were assembled. An efficient corps of teachers had been appointed, and though all of them were Polish Jews, I found them

to be men of thorough learning, capable of conversing fluently and correctly in the Hebrew, Russian, Polish, German and French languages. The school furniture was of the finest kind, the arrangements throughout all the departments complete, and the scholars looked healthy and happy. With eyes full of spirit and intelligence they greeted me smilingly. I examined the classes in the different subjects of instruction, and found them to be far advanced in Hebrew grammar, in the translation of the whole Bible and well posted in the chapters of the Talmud they had learned. They wrote German quite correctly. Some of them had gone through the elementary rules of French grammar, and being at that time still unable to examine them in their vernacular, I was assured that the Russian and Polish languages were quite familiar to them. The boys were all dressed in clean, nice *Schubetze* tied to the vest with fine silk girdles, and wore on their heads the *Jarmika,* the usual and continual covering of the Polish Jew. The teachers were all self-made men. In hidden nooks, unobserved perhaps, even by their own wives, at the late hour of midnight when all were asleep, they had to study by themselves the primary branches of the German and French languages, and by laborious self-study to acquire the knowledge through which they became so eminently useful to the rising generation. They write the Hebrew language in such a masterly style that none of the western Jews can be compared with them in this respect. They invented quite a new terminology; and one of them had translated the universal history of Politz in such classical Hebrew that even the Polish Jews were astonished at the unsurpassable production.

Words like canon, gunpowder, steam engine and thousands of others, for the rendering of which the Hebrew language has no expression, because all these subjects were entirely unknown at the time in which the Hebrew language was flourishing—these words were rendered in the most classical Hebrew, and are a living proof of the linguistic genius of our brethren in the northern regions of Europe. Though being strict orthodox Jews, they are considered heretics; they are called *Berliners* because they do not speak the miserable, corrupted jargon, but endeavor to speak every language correctly; they are suspected to be infested with new ideas, dangerous to the old forms of religion; and being acquainted with טרפה פסול, they incur the suspicion of being the pioneers of western civilization. Notwithstanding all these vexations and endless turmoils and drudgeries, these men risked even the existence and the scanty support of their families, unwilling to surrender, firmly determined to quench their thirst for knowledge at the pure fountain of modern science. They related to me the trials they had to undergo, the ordeals they had to submit to; but the immortal Mendelssohn's *Biur* to the *Torah* had taught them other knowledge than the exclusive study of the Talmud, and no suffering could prevail on them to resign the treasures they had discovered in the classical translation of the Pentateuch and the Psalms by the philosopher of Berlin. They were specimens of thousands of martyrs to science and knowledge; their history is always the same, and it is a pity that they did not enjoy a full and regular education; they would have become brilliant stars on the horizon of European science. A few of them who escaped

from the iron grasp of Russia and the blind persecution of religious fanaticism and pursued a regular course of studies at German universities gained high rank in the learned world. Solomon Maimon, the Russian Jew, who late in life visited Königsberg, so excelled in philosophy that Kant, whose lectures he attended, declared him to be the only one who fully understood his system. Dr. Valentine, now Professor of Medicine in Zürich, and one of the most eminent physiologists of our age, is one of those *Bachurim,*[58] who at eighteen years of age could not read German; and nevertheless, a few years afterwards, having finished his course of medicine and surgery, he won the medical prize offered by the Academy of France. Ben Jacob of Vilna, the editor of some very valuable books; Senior Sachs of Zhagory, the editor of the now classical *Kerem Chemed;* Edelman, the editor of some remarkable manuscripts of the library of Oxford; the renowned mathematicians and astronomers Stern and Slominsky, are but a few examples of those highly gifted men amongst our Russian brethren who, with proper training, would astonish the world by their discoveries and investigations. Certainly, we sons of western European civilization can not comprehend how the study of science can be considered heresy and a sin committed against religion; but a century ago the same sentiment prevailed in all the German *Jeshiboth.*

The principals of these two schools, Messrs. Klatczko and Rosenthal, the teachers and the pupils therefore felt really happy and satisfied that at last the hour had come in which their struggles and endeavors were appreciated. But not only for them-

[58] Talmudical students.

selves, but also for the large mass of their brethren they felt pleased that a better scientific morning was dawning, and they assured me, and were entirely right, that if the Russian Jew, highly gifted as he was, would begin the study of modern sciences, he would call forth an epoch of learned progress unparalleled in the history of modern science and literature. Listening to these words of the preachers in the wilderness, I was struck with the irresistible power of the progress of the human race. I was convinced that a better time was coming for them, too, and that the name of the Polish Jew, so bitterly despised and contemned, was to shine forth in unexpected glory and brilliancy.

In the evening I went to visit another kind of schools not established for the youngsters, but for the continuous instruction of the grown men, viz., the *Bothe Midrashim*. What an immense difference! There I was again removed to far distant centuries with the old notions, old feelings, old conceptions. There I found the old, really old, Jew again, with his ineffable respect for the *Torah,* with his unfathomable love for its study, entirely absorbed in the maze of the Talmudical labyrinth, and entirely forgetting the world around him. In these *Bothe Midrashim* every morning after the service several *Shiur*[59] by competent *Lamandim* are read; first a *Shiur* on the Code of the *Joreh Deah,* which is attended by bankers, merchants and the scholars par excellence; then comes the *Shiur* of the Talmud, which is mostly visited by the *Lamdanim,* who, diving into the depth of the witty *Pilpul,* spend the whole forenoon at their large Talmudical volumes; and

[59] Reading with explanation.

in the evening after prayer a *Shiur* is read on the *Midrashim,* which being attractive, easy and instructive at once, is visited by all the poor, who, being engaged the whole day in their different business occupations, hurry in the evening into the *Beth Hamidrash,* to listen to these instructive lectures. Here they find the inward satisfaction that having studied the law they have fulfilled a religious duty; here they find comfort and consolation, for the law teaches them the vanity of all earthly treasures, and the rich blessings in store for them in the future life; here they forget the sorrowful exclusion from the enjoyment of all rights and privileges, for the law teaches them that the Jew is a member of the chosen people, that before God there exists no privilege, no favor, no exclusion.

The poor are taught to submit patiently to the inscrutable wisdom of an all-kind Providence, and truly with heavenly resignation they bear the utmost privations, the most incredible sufferings. The rich are taught that the innumerable blessings bestowed upon them by the same Providence are but entrusted to them in order to alleviate the poverty and to supply the wants of the indigent, and truly charity is practiced by the wealthy Jew in Russia with the conviction that he fulfils a duty to his God. It is impressed upon the minds of both that virtue and righteousness have to be practiced under any and all circumstances; and notwithstanding all the usual slanders against the character of the Polish Jew, it must be universally acknowledged that religion, benevolence, charity, learning and education are the glorious results of these obsolete and antiquated *Bothe Midrashim.*

Their time is past; their fate is sealed. Even if the Russian government would not close them, substituting in their place elementary and higher schools, they soon would disappear of themselves, giving way to the improved institutions of our age.

XXVI.

After having passed the whole day examining the schools, I received in the evening an invitation from the *Stadt-Magid* (chief preacher) of the city to visit him at ten o'clock the same evening. The late hour of the appointment indicated to me that the rabbi wished to know the result of the examination in order to prevent me from making to the government a one-sided or too hasty report. I repaired to his humble rooms at the fixed time. He received me very kindly, and after having entertained me for about half an hour with some *Torah,* brandy and cakes, he left the room, inquiring whether all his housemates were already asleep. Being assured that he was safe from all listeners, he took his seat at the oak table opposite my chair, and in a low voice began to ask me:

"Well, doctor, you are firmly resolved upon introducing a change in our school system?"

"It is the will of the emperor and the order of the government, rabbi."

"Are you also aware of all the consequences that this change will effect in our religious views?"

"You see specters, rabbi, where there are none. I come from Germany where no one dreams any more of such an opposition as the Russian Jews make to the establishment of better schools; and having

quenched our thirst at the fountain of universal science and knowledge, we feel ourselves as good Jews as you do who are still frightened at the aspect of a טרפה פסול."

"You must not suppose, doctor, that I am entirely opposed to the introduction of your sciences. I have studied too frequently the immortal works of Maimonides, Ibn Esra and their successors not to be impressed with the importance, usefulness and necessity of acquiring the knowledge of profane literature; yea, the Talmud itself recommends it highly unto us, and you know that the members of the *Sanhedrin* must be well versed even in seventy languages. But we are informed by our merchants visiting the large fair at Leipsic that your brethren in Germany deal very slightly with religion, and that the religious commands are not as strictly observed as in this country."

"Rabbi, for all that we have not as many converted Jews as there are in this country. Besides, I have already heard that if a Polish Jew puts off his *Schubetze,* he treats religion with more disdain and disregard than is customary in Germany. But both our arguments lack a solid foundation; there are good and bad men amongst every nation, in every climate and under all circumstances. But granted even that the reform begun in Germany by the great Mendelssohn has led to some lamentable extremes, the false steps taken in the beginning have been remedied long ago, and you may profit by our experience to avoid all injurious extravagances."

"Doctor, I will tell you; we are ashes, all ashes; and as soon as anyone touches us, the whole edifice will crumble to pieces!"

He looked uneasily about after having uttered that gloomy sentence, whilst I stared in his face at this bold and thoughtful expression.

"You are wrong, rabbi, entirely wrong," I continued, interrupting the uncomfortable silence. "Our religion is not ashes; you confound the eternal truth contained in our doctrines with outworn and antiquated ceremonies. They, indeed, are ashes, and whether we touch them or not, time will destroy them, as in western Europe it has already destroyed a great deal of them. Put those ashes away, and the jewel of our creed shall shine forth in all its brilliancy. We and all mankind will be benefited by the removal of these your ashes."

"But the whole mass of the people will not know how to discern between the ashes and the jewel, dear doctor. If you remove the ashes they will throw away the jewel, and then what will become of our creed for which our ancestors have suffered so much, for which we ourselves undergo such endless tortures, such awful agonies? It will be surrendered in course of time, and will you be the instrument for such a calamitous and sinful destruction?

"My dear rabbi, I have too high an idea of the eternal truth of our creed to be in the least afraid of such gloomy consequences. Our creed and our people have outlived and outlasted quite other periods than that of a desirable reconciliation with the advancement and enlightenment of our age. I, on my part, consider it a sin to believe and to assert that our creed is not compatible with science and knowledge itself; its principles are light and nothing but undimmed light; its doctrines are true and eternal as God is; how can you suppose for a moment that

by the reconciliation with the irrefutable demands of our age the existence of our sacred creed will be endangered? Your Polish rabbis excommunicated the immortal Mendelssohn, when first he published his German translation of the Pentateuch; you cried "Murder!" when the pious reformer began the immense task of introducing his isolated brethren into the active arena of life; could you stop the onward march of the bold reformer? Could you bring back our brethren in western Europe to the spirit of bigotry, darkness and isolation which you considered the only safeguard of our creed? His name stands in bold relief before posterity, and the names of all these Jewish inquisitors are forgotten. Are you resolved upon repeating the same fruitless transaction?

The rabbi sighed and kept silent for some time, absorbed in deep meditation. "But his pupils," he continued, "have become apostates to our creed. Some members of his own family, I have been told, have become converts to Christianity. If apostacy should be the consequence of your proposed reform I, in the name of all my Jewish brethren, protest against it, and prefer our isolated position to all the allurements of civilization."

"Rabbi, you again confound the levity and frivolity of a few with the good and importance of the cause. The mischief, committed at the first outburst of inexperienced and unbridled wantonness and presumptuousness has been remedied in Germany long ago. A sincere attachment to the creed of our ancestors, a profound knowledge of science and the arts; a readiness to support every good institution, unbounded and unexampled charity, the dear heirloom of Israel, are the principal virtues marking our

brethren at present, and there is not the least apprehension that the old blunders will be committed again and again! And the schools we are proposing are the medium by which our brethren in Russia will avoid the reproaches you are making to Mendelssohn's school. Draw up a perfect plan for the proposed schools we intend to establish; appoint such teachers in whose religious views you can put implicit confidence; impress upon the susceptible mind of the young the doctrines of our faith, and you may instruct them afterwards in any science you please—there will be no danger to the religion. And if men of your stamp would take the subject of reform into your own hands, men whose orthodoxy no one dares to doubt, men whose profound Talmudical learning fits them for this responsible and enormous task, the people, fully confiding in your integrity, will gladly abide by your decisions. You will lay the cornerstone for the glorious edifice that the future generations will erect. While your present system is unable to stop the wheels of human progress, the course I propose to you will enable you to direct its motions and become the benefactors of your people."

The clock struck midnight. The rabbi rose from his seat. "He sleeps not and slumbers not, the Guardian of Israel," he said. "Into His hands I confide the future of my brethren. He knows best how to accomplish His end." And shaking my hand heartily he bade me good-night.

When I came home I was informed that the director of the gymnasium, Mr. O——, had been there to visit me and to invite me to a theatrical performance to be given the next evening at his mansion by

Jewish children. Jewish children playing Russian and German pieces and my conversation with the rabbi—what a contrast! Here the decaying, dismayed past, there the promising, exuberant future! Here cautious, experienced old age, there rash and care-free youth! Here the earnestness and awe of religion, there the magic power of life and its manifold enjoyments. Truly Napoleon was right when he observed: *"Les extremes se touchent!"*

XXVII.

The next evening I found in the salons of the director of the college the most select company of Vilna. Governor-General Mirkowitsh with his lady, the civil governor with his suite, and a host of the highest officers were assembled to witness the performance of the Jewish boys. The first compliments having been exchanged, the director invited his guests into one of his salons, where the stage had been erected. The curtain rose. The boys, dressed in full costume, played one of the favorite patriotic pieces in the Russian language to the unbounded satisfaction of the audience, which was quite astonished at the miracle the director had wrought with these boys. I myself, though pleased with the applause of the guests, did not feel amazed, being convinced that the highly gifted Russian Jew, if properly trained, would surely surpass all the expectations of his warmest friends. But the intermezzo that followed elicited even my applause. Three boys, twelve to thirteen years of age, and chimney sweepers by occupation, performed gymnastic exercises of the most perilous and hazardous kind. The officers of the garrison

were quite bewildered when they witnessed the physical strength, flexibility and suppleness of these youngsters. Being well aware that the Jews in Russia never practice gymnastics, since they are afraid of the peril accompanying the beginning of the exercises, they could not understand how and in what length of time the director had made them such perfect masters. When the curtain fell the director, upon receiving the congratulations of the governor-general for the success which had crowned his efforts with these boys, remarked smilingly that he was not deserving in the least of these flattering expressions, as the boys had seen these gymnastic exercises performed by an excellent band of traveling rope dancers, had copied and practiced them by themselves, so that he had but to wash, to clean and to dress them; therefore applause was owing entirely to the hazardous exertions of the boys themselves. The whole company begged for a repetition of the intermezzo; the curtain rose, the boys were called out again, and instead of repeating the old pieces, they always performed new ones. The second part of the performance consisted of Schiller's *Huldigung der Kuenste,* which was done admirably well by the boys and girls in the German language. Late in the evening when the company had dispersed, I promised the director to report directly this highly creditable entertainment to the minister, who surely would feel highly pleased with the interest the director manifested in the improvement of the Jewish youth. This being the aim of his effort, he, as I had expected, felt highly pleased with the terms in which I eulogized him; for these subaltern officers try to win by every means the favor of messengers dispatched by

the ministers, knowing very well that an extraordinary recommendation of that kind sometimes does them more good than years of faithful but unpretending service. When returning to my lodgings I thought of the conversation held the previous midnight with the *Magid,* who certainly, condemning the proceedings of the evening as חקת הגוים,[60] would have foretold the ruin of all the Jewish peculiarities.

Having been invited by the lady of the governor-general to come and see her the following forenoon, I appeared in her drawing room in full canonicals at eleven o'clock. She was a fanatical member of the Russian Church, and considered my mission as highly favorable to her proselytizing schemes. After being seated, she addressed me:

"Doctor, I thought I saw an angel when I met you the first time in the governor-general's room. What glorious times will now arrive for the chosen people of God! How quickly will they rise, proving again and again that they are the first-born sons! You must really feel proud to be so young and to have been entrusted by a kind Providence with the holy mission of the regeneration of your people!"

"Your Excellency, I can but reply with Joseph: 'Far from me, God will answer for the peace of my people.' My efforts are so unimportant, my personal merits so insignificant, that I am but a very feeble instrument in the hand of God. But the heart of kings is in the Lord's power, and if His Imperial Majesty will continue to show favor and justice unto my brethren, there certainly is not the least ap-

[60] *Chukkat Hagoyim,* "imitation of customs of the Gentiles".

prehension, but that a better morning is beginning to dawn for them."

"Oh, doctor, I know it but too well—modesty is one of the capital virtues of religious reformers. But you will not succeed by modesty alone. Meek as you must be in private intercourse, kind as you must show yourself in your discourses, you require indomitable and unflinching courage to surmount the inveterate stiff-neckedness of your brethren."

"I respect this stiff-neckedness, Your Excellency, and it is the subject of my constant admiration. The fault with which Moses reproached the people of Israel while it adhered perseveringly unto its idols became one of its national virtues, since it applied it to the upholding of the sublime doctrine of the Unity. Without this stiff-neckedness it would have succumbed a hundred times to the temptations and persecutions of all nations and ages; by it, it has surmounted all the obstacles and impediments. Being still today full of vigor and youthful power, it naturally expects the fulfilment of its divine prophecies."

"Prophecies, doctor? There is but one in which all the prophetic mysteries have found and will find their solution—it is the redemption of the human race by our Savior. Do you not believe in him, doctor?"

"No, madame. I am born a Jew and feel happy to be a Jew. The purpose of my feeble endeavors is to raise the Jews from their civil degradation to fit them for the higher services and duties of useful citizens, to remove even all the abuses that crept into our religious observances in the middle ages; but our religion, being of divine origin, can not be changed, and our brethren today, as in times of yore,

are ready to sacrifice blood and treasure rather than to yield to any missionary or proselytizing schemes."

The lady, perceiving that our conversation was taking an unpleasant turn, dropped the subject, and after having discussed with me in a very spirited manner the difference of the systems of education she dismissed me, tendering me very kindly an invitation to a teaparty for a future evening.

I was struck, whilst in the drawingroom of the governor's lady, with the remarkable and agreeable fact that the Russian nobility, though despising the Jews and their religion, do not dispute them the title of the chosen people. They acknowledge willingly the merits of the Jewish revelation, and they even feel proud if a Jewish convert intermarries with their families, glorying in the fact that the blood of God's people is flowing in their veins too. But Nicholas' gigantic proselytizing schemes had inspired them all with such a religious fanaticism that the bigots dreamed of nothing but of the conversion of the Jews to their Greek Church, whose final aim is and must be the union of all denominations into Russian idolatry.

Having made an appointment with one of my friends to visit the Jewish cemetery in the afternoon, we hurried thither. What an immense space! What a place of awe and reverence! Here slept quietly the tired pilgrims of many centuries, not dreaming of the change that was hovering over their graves. Here rested the great men renowned for their piety and Talmudical learning, the authorities for Jewish posterity. Thousands and thousands of gravestones covered the arena beyond the reach of the eye; and even this place of sacred rest had been disturbed by

the ruthless hands of military Russian power! A large tract of the cemetery had been claimed by the government for the extension of the fortification of the city; the stones had been broken and demolished, the bones of the disturbed corpses removed into one large pit, and the work of pitiless destruction went on without mercy and interruption. My companion directing my attention to the inscription on a gravestone of a *Ger Zedek* (pious proselyte), told me that there rested the ashes of a Count Potocki, a Polish nobleman, who was burnt at the stake for having embraced the Jewish religion. The count, being a member of one of the first Polish noble families, was bitterly blamed by his relations for his apostasy; every effort was used to bring him back into the bosom of the Roman Catholic Church; but all entreaties being frustrated by his perseverance, he fell into the hands of the Roman clergy that condemned him to the stake. A Friday was the day of execution. When already on the stake, the deacon once more requested him to save the honor of his family by renouncing Judaism. The count refused and was burnt alive. The legend extolling his martyrdom relates that a white pigeon started heavenwards out of the flames. The Jews gathered the ashes of the pious martyr and buried them among the graves of their holy rabbis. A peculiar kind of flower, during the summer, adorns the grave of the *Ger Zedek*.

XXVIII.

Three weeks had passed since I laid the proposition of the Department of Public Instruction before the President and Board of Trustees of the Jewish

congregation of Vilna, but the object of my mission did not seem to advance. Though I urged the matter in different ways, I received now promises, now counter-observations, all tending to the one point, that Vilna, though always ready to obey the commands of the government, was not willing to take the lead in so grave a matter single handedly. I would foster my object, I was told, if I could gain the co-operation of another Jewish city of importance, and some friends of Minsk having sent me a hearty invitation to visit that city, I was prompted to make an excursion thither. Having tried all means to persuade them to the contrary, I consented to leave for Minsk and to return to Vilna as soon as I would have accomplished my mission in that place.

Accompanied by the best wishes of my friends and the suspicious expectations of my clandestine antagonists I took my departure, and without any extraordinary accident arrived safely in Minsk. The governor-general and the curator had provided for me the necessary passports and letters of recommendation, and with an uneasy heart I alighted at the house of one of the Jewish aristocrats, where lodgings had been prepared for me.

Minsk, in 1841, was one of the strongholds of Rabbinism in Russia. The first rays of civilization had not yet begun to dawn upon this congregation; whilst Vilna numbered hundreds of young men well versed in modern literature, and favoring a reform of the educational systems, in Minsk not ten men could be found inclined to promote the subject of my endeavors. The study of the Talmud was reigning with omnipotent sway, and the visitors of the richly endowed Beth-Hamidrash were exercising an

unbounded influence. The *Melamdim,* who considered their existence endangered by any change in the system of instruction, were ready to make a phalanx-like stand against my scheme and to stir up all the hostile elements possible to frustrate any overture made by me towards this end. The Chassidim had crept into Minsk, established their *Chassidim-Stuebel* (synagogues) and were trying to promulgate their teachings, an undertaking in which they had not yet succeeded in Vilna. But instead of opposing the *Misnagdim* (Rabbinists) as they were wont to do in all other cases, they soon made common cause with them to defeat me, who was considered to be their common enemy. Sound Talmudical study, accompanied by *Pilpul* and all its extravagances; a hatred against all, even the most useful innovations, commands and *Minhagim;* unstained morality throughout all the classes of Jewish society (a fact Vilna could not boast of); more wealth, by far less poverty, and hence also more independence and self-reliance—these were the characteristics of the congregation I now had to deal with.

During my sojourn in Minsk, which I visited twice thereafter, I made the acquaintance of but two gentlemen who favored a better system of education, and by self-erudition had become well versed in German literature. They were Mr. Susele Rappoport and his intimate friend, Rabbi Israel Michael Jeshurun. Rappoport, born of poor parents in one of the obscure villages of the State of Minsk, showed such eminent talents in his childhood that he soon acquired a high reputation as a Talmudical scholar. When about thirteen years of age he was accompanied by his father to Minsk, where upon delivering a *Dera-*

shah in the *Beth-Hamidrash,* he elicited the admiration of all the rabbis present and the universal applause of the community. With a great store of learning and great sagacity he defended his thesis against the numberless and endless queries of his Talmudical antagonists, and when he left the synagogue his fame as an *Ilui* (eminent scholar) was established. All the rabbis and rich men of the place vied with one another to invite him into their houses and to enjoy his company; and one of these plutocrats, who had two daughters, immediately resolved upon engaging him to the younger one, whom he married a few years afterwards. In the meantime he was continually engaged in the exclusive study of the Talmud, while his father-in-law defrayed all his expenses. A few years afterwards he was initiated into the complicated mysteries of commerce and succeeded in all his undertakings. When his father-in-law died he inherited over 100,000 rubles silver, and with his brother-in-law, Mr. Aaron Turie, was considered the wealthiest and most influential man in the city. But while Turie strongly favored and supported the darkest extremes of the Rabbinists, Rappoport became a strong and learned advocate of a reform of the educational system, as pursued heretofore. He was bold enough to have his children instructed in the modern languages, a fact that greatly diminished the fame he was enjoying of being one of the pillars of Talmudical science and literature. He was the first who bought a piano, to have his daughters instructed in music; this called forth an outburst of the most fierce indignation. His wife, though related to the hyperorthodox Chief Rabbi of Krakau, dared now and then to change the Polish

Sterntuechel for a hood *a la Parisienne,* and in her house a more refined menage was apparent throughout all the departments.

The friend of Mr. Susele Rappoport was Rabbi Israel Michael Jeshurun, a man who, if circumstances would have favored him to be called into Germany, would doubtless have been numbered amongst the greatest contemporaries of Jewish literature, and with Rappoport of Prague and Zunz of Berlin, would have formed a constellation of the first grandeur. He was a man over five feet high, of slender build, red nose, black eyes and black beard. His exterior at the first meeting was unattractive, but as soon as he was engaged in conversation his vast erudition elicited the warmest affection and admiration.

United by earnest researches and deep investigations in the Talmud, both Rappoport and Jeshurun felt an unquenchable thirst for other sciences. But the means were missing for obtaining the required information. Surrounded by the ever-watchful fanatics of the *Beth Hamidrash,* by thousands of *Melamdim,* who considered any innovation the sure ruin of the system by which they were making a living, afraid of being decried as heretics and apostates, besides being injured in their business, for a long time they were at a loss how to quench their thirst for knowledge.

XXIX.

On the following Sabbath I visited the synagogues, but met with the same cold and reserved treatment. Meetings were held all over the city at which the

firm resolution was voiced by all present to defeat my scheme at once. It was said: "If Vilna gave ear to these dangerous reforms of the educational system it is not to be wondered at, since for many a year all misfortunes have been caused by the intrigues and irreligion of the Berliners; the better ones in the Jewish metropolis have been intimidated by the threats of godless informers, and hence the unmanly and ungodly submissiveness on the part of the Jewish authorities of Vilna. But Minsk, thank God," they continued, "is not afraid of the consequences that decided opposition will bring; we are ready for martyrdom, and by setting a glorious example to all our sister cities, we will deserve well of our religion like the heroes of old." The *Melamdim,* whose existence was at stake, were overbusy in fomenting this tumultuous spirit; false rumors were spread all over the city; all kinds of calumnies were related, and on Sunday morning all business was at a standstill. No subject but the meeting of the evening was discussed. My journey to Minsk had proved not only an entire failure, but was sure to react most unfavorably upon Vilna. I pitied not myself, but my friends, against whom all kinds of fanatical threats were uttered, and with an uneasy heart I went into the large rooms of the vestry at 6 o'clock in the evening.

They were crowded to the utmost. The presiding officers of the congregation were not present as yet, and the utmost disorder prevailed. The greatest indignation against the proposed reform of the schools was unanimously manifested. The leading members of the *Beth Hamidrash* threatened with banishment and excommunication anyone who would dare sup-

port such a frivolous scheme. The *Melamdim* unfaltering and united like a phalanx described in gloomy colors the future punishment awaiting those who would lead the innocent children to apostacy. The *Shiur* rabbis could not quote enough Talmudical sentences proving the wickedness of those who would indulge in the reading of *Terefa Posul,* and the determination to defeat any motion made in favor of my mission was general. I could not recognize any more the usual quiet and calm of the Russian Jew; roused by fanaticism, they were like infuriated lions. I perceived the uselessness of advocating in this meeting the cause to which I had devoted my best energies. Some of my best friends, afraid of the result of this meeting and the treatment I was risking, advised me to leave the assembly, saying that they would inform me of its result at the close of the debate.

I went home discouraged and dismayed, not only for the sake of Minsk, in which city my cause was lost irretrievably, but because of the retroactive influence it needs must exercise over Vilna. Upon my way home I found people discussing and debating the same subject most fervently at the corner of every street. They treated me in the most abusive manner, and threatened me with all kinds of bitter vengeance. The excitement throughout the city was intense, increasing every minute by the inflammatory discourses held by the *Melamdim.* Each and all were resolved to risk everything to prevent my unjustifiable infringements upon the religion.

The solitude of my apartment made me feel uneasy. The ladies of the house looked so gloomy and suspicious that their company made my stay still

more disagreeable, and I hurried away into the lovely circle of Rappoport's family. In passing the vestry rooms I heard such an uproar of voices that really I began to fear the worst. I found Jeshurun in Rappoport's house; he had left the *Beth Hamidrash* an hour earlier than usual, disgusted at the abusive language he was constrained to hear in the course of the day. He sat there in the old, leathern armchair, looking gloomy and pensive and despairing of the success of the noble ideas he had entertained so cheerfully for many years past. He shook my hand heartily without uttering a word, so deeply was he affected. He, too, was awaiting anxiously the return of Rappoport, who had promised to be back as soon as the meeting had adjourned. We had not to wait very long. With his usual calmness and tranquility of mind he entered the chamber, uttering sighingly the sad words: "Lost, all lost!" We three then shook hands, like the noble conspirators on the Rütli, each one resolving silently and by himself not to give up the good cause in which we had engaged. He then related to us how easily our enemies had carried off the palm of victory, and that under the present circumstances there was not the least chance for any success whatever.

I then declared to them my intention of leaving the city in a few days in order to quench, if possible, the opposition that would now raise its head in Vilna, or in case I should fail in that ominous task to go directly back to St. Petersburg and to try other ways and means. They approved of my resolution and sent two of their servants with me to see me home, afraid that some accident might befall me on the way.

The public joy over the defeat was as intense the next morning as had been the efforts to accomplish this defeat the day before. I was shunned everywhere in the streets. No one greeted me, everyone being afraid of coming in contact with him who was considered almost an outlaw; and when three days afterwards I left the city none of my friends were with me to bid me farewell. The scorn and derision of wanton children were the last sounds that accompanied me out of the city of Minsk.

XXX.

It was Friday afternoon when discouraged and dismayed I arrived at my lodgings in Vilna. The news of my return spread like wildfire through the city. No sooner was the service of Friday evening terminated than my friends hurried to my room to see me. It was no friendly and joyful welcome that awaited me; gloomy and dejected they came in like mourners, shook hands with me, and in true Jewish-Russian style sat down in thoughtful silence awaiting the sad report I had to make. I related without exaggeration all the events that had passed in Minsk, reported the total defeat I had experienced and the stern and unbending opposition I had met with. One reproached me for having gone to Minsk before my project had taken firm root in Vilna; another, who had advised me to go thither, expressed his sorrowful astonishment at his miscalculation and my discomfiture; the third told me that letters from Minsk had already spread throughout the city the details of the manly deportment of the Jews of Minsk, and that great preparations were made to frustrate all

further schemes of this kind; the fourth, a true friend of mine, and disgusted with the opposition, initiated in all their mysteries and intrigues, stated that next Passover opposition would be made on a grand, hitherto unknown scale, and that I must prepare myself for the worst. The nimbus that surrounded me on my first arrival in Vilna was gone; the implicit confidence I had enjoyed was shaken, for people are given to pronouncing their verdict after the result of any enterprise. The result of my journey to Minsk being entirely unfavorable, they all seemed to become prophets of evil forebodings.

Being prepared for such a reception, I replied that I would pass the Passover calmly and composedly in Vilna, in spite of the threatening storm that was hovering over us; that I would stand to the last and without infringing upon the rights of our brethren, I would not surrender before the government would order me to give up the glorious undertaking in which we were engaged.

The few weeks before Passover the Jewish families of Vilna, as everywhere else, were too much engaged with the preparations for the feast and the distribution of *Matzoth* to the numberless poor for any leisure to be spared for agitation. The officers of the congregations sat in almost continuous meetings to provide for all the destitute who called on them for charity. Besides the resident poor, a large number of Russian soldiers came to Vilna; these also had to be attended to, for Passover is the only time in the year in which they are enabled to live according to the rabbinical observances. The burden imposed during this time upon the treasury and private liberality of the Jewish congregation is so heavy that

the generals and colonels of the different regiments garrisoned in Vilna willingly contribute their voluntary mite towards defraying the enormous expenses. Hence it was comparatively quiet in the city; but it was merely the calm preceding the coming storm.

The question was agitated only in the *Bothe Midrashim,* where the *Melamdim* made the necessary preparations for the outbreak, gathering all their forces and enrolling in behalf of their cause as many as were willing to join them. All kinds of rumors were set afloat which increased the general uncertainty and uneasiness to such a degree that the chief of police, Colonel R——, resolved upon attending the meeting himself.

The feast had come, but was not celebrated with the usual hilarity and joyfulness. No sooner had the people left the synagogues and partaken of their dinners than meetings were held everywhere. The *Melamdim* faithfully copied the example of their fellow teachers of Minsk; instigated by letters they had received from their friends in that city, they used the most inflammatory language, exciting all passions, exhorting the doubtful, encouraging the intimidated and infuriating the fanatics. The manly deportment of the men of Minsk was extolled to the sky in terms the most praiseworthy, and in language most abusive the cowardly behavior of the Jewish officers of Vilna was depicted. True, the chief rabbi and the principal associates of the *Beth Din* remained neutral; fearing for their offices they lacked the moral courage of taking my part openly, neither could they join the party of the opposition. But the hourly increasing number of the opponents did not care very much for their support; relying

upon their strength they preferred to act for themselves to being checked by the precaution and circumspection likely to be exercised by the Jewish officials.

At last the first day of *Chol Hammoed*[61] appeared; the meeting was called for one o'clock in the afternoon to take final action on the plan I had laid before them about three months prior. The vestry was crowded to the utmost; the *Schulhof* was filled in every corner; over 40,000 men were present ready to dictate by force and not to listen to any reasoning argument; the glorious example of the steadfast city of Minsk had to be imitated, be the consequences what they may. The president of the congregation presided. The chief of police was present, accompanied by one of his Cossacks, to be sent wherever an emergency would require his services. But it was impossible to maintain any order in the debate; propositions were made and carried; the excitement increased continually; no speaker could make himself heard; my scheme was denounced as godless and sinful; threats of the most daring kind were uttered, and even the chief of police was grossly insulted. Though fully resolved to show the greatest forbearance to the masses infuriated by religious fanaticism and prejudice, he soon perceived that he had to take energetic measures to stop the uproar if he did not want to be found guilty of allowing a revolutionary upheaval. In order to set an example he therefore arrested the *Parnass,* whose dissimulation he had penetrated, and ordered the fire companies to come and to disperse the crowd by

[61] The days intervening between the first and last days of the feast.

throwing streams of water from their powerful engines. The cold water appeased the inflamed fury; the people fled in all directions; in half an hour the place was vacated, but in Vilna for the present my case was lost irretrievably.

It was indeed no holiday that I spent in Vilna. The time hung so heavily upon me; the animosity against me increased steadily, and the encouragement of my friends decreased. When I was returning home at a late hour in the evening I was afraid of being stabbed by fanatics who had uttered all kinds of foul threats against me. There was only one man, from the neighboring town of Vilkomir, who, though belonging to the sect of the *Chassidim*, never ceased to cheer me up. Two days afterwards he came into my room, accompanied by a Jewish tailor, saying: "Doctor, as you are going to St. Petersburg, to make up for what we have lost here, I intend to present you with a new suit of the finest black cloth you ever wore. Be of good cheer, we are lost only if we will give up ourselves; but as long as we stand firm and fearless, there is not the least danger of being vanquished." I thanked him heartily; for the least encouragement in such times of troubles is a refreshing balm for the bleeding heart.

I made the necessary preparations for my immediate departure after the holidays. When I took leave of the governor-general and the curator of the schools, both expressed their deep indignation at the deportment of my coreligionists and informed me that they had reported all that had happened to the respective authorities in the Russian metropolis. I felt sorry for this, because being resolved not to

expose my brethren, I was afraid of the sad consequences those reports would bring them. Without delay I therefore started for St. Petersburg the first night after the holidays.

XXXI.

I had been assured by my friends before leaving Vilna that if I started at nine o'clock in the evening I would reach Vilkomir the next morning before the mail coach from Warsaw would arrive to take the passengers to St. Petersburg. I therefore left Vilna at the appointed hour, but upon arriving at Vilkomir I was informed, to my great disappointment, that the mail coach had already passed the city two hours before. Being anxious to reach the capital before the official reports of the failure of my mission would lead to any fatal consequences, I consulted with the secretary appointed to that post station as to how I could overtake the mail. He told me that if I traveled the whole day without partaking of any meal or rest I might have a chance to meet the mail in the evening at Orcha, where the passage of a ferry always caused some delay; and in order to accommodate me he would give me the best horses in the stable, the same with which the emperor himself traveled when passing this route. I had now to prepare myself for a courier's passage. A common cart without any springs whatever, covered with some bundles of straw, was my vehicle of transportation. My trunk had to serve as a seat, on which I passed the day. The road over which we had to travel hastily was extremely rough, as most of the roads in Russia are; there was no prospect for an

agreeable journey. According to the habit of Russian *Feldjägers* (couriers), I put a girdle around my waist and recommended my soul to God and my body to the mercy of the driver. I promised him a reward in case he would hasten on.

The Russian drivers use no whip; they have only a small stick on which they sit down, and when now and then they show it to their horses they speak to them, and the horses are so used to it that the driver has but to address them with the friendly words, "Work on, children!" and they start with a swiftness quite unknown in Germany. No sooner had my driver, encouraged by a glass of brandy with which I had treated him, uttered the words familiar to his horses than they started off at such a full trot that I could perceive neither trees nor houses; the wind blew sharply in our faces and clouds of dust whirled around and about us. In half an hour I was so horribly shaken through that being unable to sit any longer on my trunk I had to lie down on the straw. We soon reached the next station. While I entered the office to have my passport registered (which has to be done in every office) and pay the fees, I was informed that the cart was ready to start. With a terrible headache and pains in my side I mounted the cart, exposing myself for another long tour to the same painful torture. I hardly thought I would be able to continue my journey, when at noon we reached the mighty fortress Dunaburg. The secretary, who was a German, pitying my fatigued appearance, urged me to take a cup of tea, promising that by giving me the best horses of the route he would make up for the few moments I was losing in partaking of this refreshment. When

I stepped to my cart I found two ponies attached to it. "Are these little creatures your best team of horses?" I asked him, quite astonished. "Yes, sir. Hurry on; they are going to start," was the reply. And he was right; we made twenty-one English miles in somewhat over an hour.

I hurried from station to station, and at last in the evening at six o'clock I saw the mail coach waiting at the ferry, to be carried to Orcha. The driver drove his horses with lightning speed, and happily we arrived at the spot before the ferry started. On the ferry I jumped down from my cart, and hurrying up to the conductor I asked him: "Is there room for one passenger more to St. Petersburg?" "No," was the stern reply. "The coach is full." "But I have an imperial passport. I am going as courier to St. Petersburg. Would you not take a coach more? You will perhaps get some passengers on the way." "I can not do it. You will have to wait till tomorrow morning at eight o'clock, then another coach will leave; and by recording your name this evening a place for you will be secured anyhow." Though greatly disappointed at this answer, I did not feel sorry for it, for I was so thoroughly tired and felt such pains in all my limbs that I gladly seized the opportunity of passing the night in a bed.

Having partaken of supper I was immediately shown into my room and went to bed. I slept soundly as never before. But early in the morning I awoke and felt exceedingly uneasy all over my body. A creeping and stinging disturbed me so badly that I arose from my bed and lighted a candle. But it is impossible to describe my astonishment when I beheld that my trousers, shirt, stockings and

flannel jacket were all full of gigantic bedbugs, such as I had never seen before. I remembered that I was in a Russian inn, and that I had been told that in some of them the legs of the bedstead are put into pails of water in order to drown these troublesome insects, and to save the traveler from any such incommodity. I had to undress myself and throw all the garments in which I had slept out of the windows. I then hurried into a bath, which luckily was at hand, and having refreshed myself, I continued my journey to St. Petersburg at eight o'clock in the company of several merchants and officers.

We arrived there the next day early in the morning. At six o'clock I waited on Councilor Duksta Dykskinsky, who told me that the department had received official information of all that had passed in Minsk and Vilna, and that the minister was anxious to see me. He therefore advised me to go and see Prince Shirinski Shichmatoff, who could tell me the precise time when the minister would grant me an audience. As he resided nearby I went to call on him, and being admitted into his presence he told me that at noon I should come to the minister's salon, whence he could take me to him.

It was Easter week. On Easter Sunday a levee always takes place at the imperial court, where all the persons enjoying the right to appear at court and the municipal authorities offer the emperor their congratulations. The ministers of the different departments receive their subordinates in the course of Easter week, and the day of my arrival had been appointed a reception day in the Department of Public Instruction. When I entered the large salon I found it crowded to the utmost with men in richly

embroidered uniforms and stars and ribbons of the different imperial decorations. The members of the Academy of Science, the officers of the departments, the heads of all the scientific schools and institutions were assembled awaiting the arrival of the minister. Looking very poor in my black dress coat in the midst of this gilded and glittering assembly, I remained near the entrance door without mingling with this aristocratic crowd.

XXXII.

At one o'clock the minister, Count Uwaroff, followed by the director of the department, Prince Shirinsky Shichmatoff, entered the large reception hall. Deep silence prevailed. He did not wear his gold embroidered dress coat, but the one which he usually wore during the service, decorated with the two great stars of the Order of Vladimir and the White Eagle. No sooner had he conversed for a few minutes with some of the principal officers present than he walked down the long hall, and shaking my hand heartily, said: "Doctor, I am pleased to see you here safe and in good health. I am informed of all that has passed in Minsk and Vilna. Stay here till the reception is over, then come into my salon, as I am anxious to hear your report." This cordial deportment of the minister drew the attention of the whole crowd to me. I was introduced to a great many of these men with stars and ribbons, and everyone was anxious to know the man whom the minister had treated with such courtesy.

Half an hour afterwards the assembly had been dismissed, and I was ushered into the minister's

private chamber. There I met the director and vice-director of the department and the chief aide-de-camp of the Grand Duke Michael, the emperor's brother. The minister kindly introduced me to the latter, and having listened attentively to a brief report of my adventures he ordered me to return at six o'clock in the evening, when he could discuss the whole subject with me.

In spite of the treatment I had experienced from my brethren in faith, I had made up my mind to save them from any fatal consequences and to bring the question to an issue favorable to the government and to the Jews. I intended to assist the government in carrying out the noble plan of reforming the educational system of the Jews, and on the other hand to obtain for them all possible security against any infringement on their sacred faith. Being myself too young to take upon my shoulders the responsibility of such an immense task, I had resolved upon trying my best to get assistants in this gigantic work; hence I tried first to excuse the Jews for the opposition they had shown against the government, and then to lay a plan before the minister, showing how the emperor's will could be carried out to the entire satisfaction of the Jewish population.

Therefore, when at the appointed hour I entered the minister's chamber, he addressed me thus:

"Well, doctor, you have been shamefully abused by our Jews. I did not expect this opposition on their part."

I replied: "Your Excellency, the Jews are not to blame. I think it was a mistake on the part of the department to select me for this important mission. The Jews are used to respect only age and experi-

ence; and hence when they saw me, who am but twenty-five years of age, their confidence was gone and their suspicion aroused. You have taught the Russian people to respect their nationality. Under the government of the present emperor the foreigners in all departments have to step into the background. My Jewish brethren are also, I suppose, jealous that a Russian Jew was not entrusted with this important charge, and I entertain not the least doubt that as soon as you will call upon some of the influential men of the Jewish community the Jews will carry out unanimously and readily the well-intentioned plan of the imperial government. But I, being very young, a foreigner, unacquainted with the Russian vernacular and the routine of Russian affairs, am looked upon with full and not unjustifiable suspicion. Some of them even suspect me of being a missionary, fostering in disguise some proselytizing schemes. You should call on men who enjoy their fullest confidence, and I am sure all your expectations will be surpassed."

The minister seemed to be pleased with my plea. That I did not despair of the final result of his favorite scheme, which no doubt he was able to carry out by force, but which he preferred to see favored by the Jews themselves; that I showed him a tangible plan how this result might be attained easily; that I charged the failure of my mission to my own account, and not to the fanatical obstinacy of the Jews—all this made a rather good impression on him.

"I do it willingly and conscientiously, Your Excellency. I heard in Vilna men of all shades of opinion expressing their full confidence in your good intentions. A large majority is fully aware that some-

thing must be done for the improvement of Jewish education, and that the Jew can impossibly remain alienated and isolated from the civilization of the present day. But the *Melamdim* are afraid of losing the ways and means of making a living, and as soon as they will be shown that their services will be needed for some future time, their opposition will be weakened; and the others, fearing that their faith will be exposed to imminent danger, may be appeased if we give them some guarantee that this is neither the case nor your intention."

"Well, what guarantee shall we give them?"

"Your Excellency, you know that Napoleon, when he began his great reform among the French Jews, convened a *Sanhedrin* in France to which he invited the most influential rabbis and laymen of the French empire. Some of their answers evinced an attitude quite beyond the intellectual position the Jews in France, especially in Alsace, were then occupying. Nevertheless, the Jews willingly acquiesced in the decision given by men of whose integrity and learning they could entertain no doubt whatever. The consistories then established by Napoleon, and prosperous still today, exercised such a beneficial influence on the French Jews that you find them today in every branch of the public service holding many offices with the greatest honor to themselves and to the entire satisfaction of the government. If now His Imperial Majesty would deign to order a convention of rabbis to gather in St. Petersburg, elected by the Jews themselves, and presided over by Your Excellency, I am quite convinced that you would attain the same glorious aim that was reached in France. Every mistrust must give way; every fear of prosel-

ytizing schemes must vanish when men of their own choice are to be their representatives and the framers of the new system; and the name of Uwaroff will be recorded in the annals of Jewish history with gratitude and reverence."

"The plan is a good one," replied the minister. "I am extremely pleased with this suggestion; it agrees entirely with my views, and I shall take it up at once. How many rabbis, doctor, do you suggest that we should order to be convened?"

"The more the better, Your Excellency. You know that the Jews of the Russian empire are divided into *Misnagdim* and *Chassidim,* and that the latter again are subdivided into numerous classes. Hence, in order to avoid all motives of jealousy, if you would order one rabbi from every province in which the Jews are permitted to live, the convention would be quite representative and give satisfaction all around."

"See tomorrow," replied the minister, "the Councilor Duksta Dykshinsky. Draw up with him a plan for this purpose. I then shall submit it to the committee of ministers and to the emperor, and as soon as I shall have received the emperor's signature we will go to work earnestly."

Happy at the result of this audience, and pleased with the idea of having averted any fatal consequence from my coreligionists I hurried home where some friends, awaiting my return, congratulated me on the unexpected success of my first visit to the minister.

XXXIII.

The minister had presented to the Council of Ministers his plan of convening a Jewish Synod in St. Petersburg. The council at once approved of the scheme that from each of the seventeen provinces of the empire in which the Jews are permitted to live, one rabbi should be delegated to the intended synod. The memorial was presented to the emperor as usual for approval, and after three days (for Nicholas never kept any paper longer than three days) it was remitted to the department, the emperor approving of the plan; the subjects to be discussed by the synod were indicated, but the number of its members was restricted to four. Though somewhat disheartened by this restriction, the minister felt pleased with the approval of the idea, and in the afternoon I received a letter, addressed to me by Councilor Duksta Dykshinsky, informing me that I was to appear at the minister's villa on the next morning at eleven o'clock, when news of the highest importance would be communicated to me by His Excellency.

At the appointed time I was at the villa which the minister had purchased only a few weeks before and used as his summer residence. The entire vicinity of St. Petersburg is laid out in such villas, inhabited during the summer by the Russian aristocracy, whose official services do not permit them to reside on their large estates in the different provinces. The emperor himself and all the members of the imperial family have immense palaces in this vicinity, and Peterhof fairly rivals Versailles, after the model of which it is built. Any stranger visiting during the summer months the capital with its fine villas, immense gar-

dens, beautiful promenades and all the embellishments that art can add to nature, would not dream of being in frigid Russia; he might well imagine that he was passing one of the most delightful seasons under the blue and serene sky of Italy. Besides this, during the months of July and August it is scarcely ever night in St. Petersburg; at one o'clock after midnight the light of the setting sun is still perceptible on one side of the firmament, while on the other the break of day makes its appearance.

I was overcome with the magnificence of the minister's summer residence. While admiring the surrounding scenery, I was ordered into Count Uwaroff's cabinet, as he was rather anxious to see and communicate to me the agreeable tidings.

"Well, doctor, your plan has been approved of. I have received yesterday the document signed by His Majesty, and I feel highly pleased, indeed, that the schemes fostered by me for so long a time will become a reality at last. Though the emperor has restricted the number of the delegates to four, I am sure that this imperial favor will overcome all the prejudices and fears of your coreligionists, while proving to them at the same time that the government is in earnest and that they have to prepare themselves for a change of their educational system."

I expressed my sincere thanks for the untiring efforts of the minister in behalf of my brethren, and assured him again that he would experience no further opposition, as the idea of seeing their rabbis participate in the deliberation of the new school plan would reconcile them altogether with this well-intended reform.

"But whom, doctor, would you propose as dele-

gates? We want men in whose honesty and enlightenment we can put confidence, and do not wish to have men assembled whose mental blindness and stubborness would counteract the best intentions of the department."

"I am not acquainted well enough, Your Excellency, with the Jews in the southwestern and western provinces of the empire to give you any name. Moreover, if the department would take the initiative of pointing out the men to be convened, the confidence of the Jews again would be thoroughly shaken, and you would not attain the aim of appeasing their apprehensions. Your Excellency must be kind enough to adopt in this case the republican principle, that the people themselves may choose their representatives. If you are willing to grant this favor, I entertain not the least doubt that they will send you rabbis to the mutual satisfaction of the government and the Jews."

"But the emperor," continued the minister, "having allowed us to invite but four delegates, how can we satisfy all the Jews living in the seventeen western provinces?"

"The Jews," I replied, "are living in these seventeen provinces under the jurisdiction of four governors-general: General Mirkowitsh in Vilna, General Bibekoff in Kief, General Woronzoff in Odessa, and General R—— in Vitebsk. If one rabbi is selected from each of these four large divisions, I think there can be no dissatisfaction among my brethren."

"Well, I agree willingly to that proposition; it is a very good and practicable one and will remove all misunderstanding. I will even point out no names whatever; the Jews shall have the privilege of elect-

ing their representatives. I yield that point as a proof that I rely entirely on their good sense, and that I put more confidence in them than they have put in your propositions made in Vilna and Minsk. But there is another point of importance I have to communicate to you: you must prepare yourself, and that immediately, for another journey through all the provinces in which the Jews are living. You shall inform them of my plans, gain their assistance in behalf of it, superintend their election of delegates, and try your best to promote the well-intended reforms of the emperor."

I was struck with this proposition and did not know how to answer. Having experienced such ill treatment at the hands of the Talmudists, what had I not to expect at the hands of fanatical and bigoted *Chassidim?* The minister observed my uneasiness and continued:

"Be not afraid, doctor. We will take good care that you shall return safely. I will request Mr. Perowski, the Minister of the Interior, to furnish you with a general order to all the governors-general that they are to grant you any assistance you may require to fulfil the order of the department. Such a document is given only in extraordinary cases, and must be used with great precaution, but you shall have it. I will moreover request Count Renkendorf, the Minister of Police, to send an order to all his officers to aid and assist you as much as will be in their power. I shall provide you with letters of introduction and recommendation to all the governors whose provinces you will visit, and being provided with these documents you will not have the least cause for any apprehension."

I thanked the minister in the warmest terms for his kindness and sympathy, and asked him when he wished me to be ready to start.

"You can leave next week," he replied. "The department will pay for the carriage which you will buy for the journey, defray the expenses for your horses, permit daily expenses for you and one servant you may take along, according to the usual regulations, provide for you the necessary passports, and in the course of the week I shall order Dykshinski to finish the instructions upon which you have to act. I wish you to be here again next Thursday, when the instructions will be ready."

Having returned to my lodgings I began to make the necessary preparations for a journey pregnant with so much risk and danger. I ordered an acquaintance of mine to buy a carriage, a large traveling box in which to keep the necessary provisions, and a leather bed on which to sleep when arriving in a tavern where all accommodations for travelers are wanting. In the course of two days I had finished all my arrangements. I then called on Counselor Dykshinski and pointed out to him the necessity of giving me in the instructions the plain and full assurance that the religion of my brethren should be infringed upon in no way and manner by the intended reform. I stated emphatically that I would not offer my services without such an assurance on the part of the government, removing my doubts and uneasiness, or else we had surely to expect a second failure if I could not give an unqualified answer to my brethren regarding this all-important question. The counselor promised me willingly to do so, and that the instructions signed by the minister, vice-

minister and himself would certainly contain the assurance.

On the following Thursday at the appointed time I called at the minister's and received the following instructions:

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

No. 7206. Division III. July 22, 1842.

To the Director of the Hebrew School of Riga, Rabbi Dr. Lilienthal.

As by order of the department you are going to set out on a journey through the provinces inhabited by the Jews, I request you to have regard to the following points:

1. The line of your journey goes through Riga, Mitau, Kovno, Vilna, Minsk, Grodno, Byalystok, Zhitomir, Berditchef, Kaminiecz-Podolsk, Kishinef, Odessa, Cherson; from there you will go to the province of Kief, pass Uman to the city of Kief, and further to Chernigof, Mogilef and Vitebsk back to St. Petersburg. Moreover, here are pointed out only the principal places you have to visit; but it is left to you, if you deem it necessary to stop also at other places on your way, but without leaving the route hereby designated to you.

2. You will receive a free passport and eight hundred rubles silver towards defraying your expenses.

3. You will not neglect, in every place where you will have to stop, to inform the civil and school authorities who have been informed of your journey immediately of your arrival, to enter into communication with the Jews living in those places and to confer with the congregation.

4. You will explain to the Jews that the intention of the order of His Majesty, by virtue of which the Jewish schools and academies will be put under the superintendence of the Department of Public Instruction, and new schools will be established at the expense of the government, to be no other than, without infringing upon their religion, to prepare them for a truly civil and moral life, which consists merely in the approach to universally acknowledged civilization. With this intention you will confer with the rabbis and Jewish congregations, and by sermons and lectures you will endeavor to confirm them in their readiness to carry out the will of His Majesty.

5. You will try to discover the public opinion in regard to the intended reform, and to learn where and from whom the government may expect some assistance, and in whom the spirit of resistance is lurking. You will note down those of the rabbis and the most prominent Jews who deserve greater confidence from the government and hand me a list of their names.

6. You will not omit visiting those Jews who are respected by the congregation, and explaining to them minutely what influence upon the weal of their co-religionists a prompt compliance with the good intentions of His Majesty must exercise.

7. As far as possible, both in point of morals and pedagogics, you will visit and examine at least the most important schools and academies of the Jews, and gather information respecting the number of scholars, the number and ability of the teachers, the organization of the schools, and the means by which they are supported.

8. As far as possible, you will investigate the do-

mestic education of the Jews, inquire concerning the number, views, abilities and present position of the *Melamdim,* and take the names of those who are distinguished by their learning and moral deportment.

9. You will direct your particular attention to the young people who, by praiseworthy study, have already acquired some progress in the sciences and will be able, by their laudable endeavors for the prosperity of their coreligionists, to contribute to the realization of the intentions of the government. They may be appointed teachers or be prepared for the pedagogical career in the public institutions.

10. After your return to St. Petersburg you will hand me your report on all the subjects above mentioned. Moreover, you will not omit, even during your travels, from time to time, to inform the Department of Public Instruction of the success of your mission.

11. The great variety of the subjects entrusted to your charge makes it impossible to fix the term of your journey; but I hope that you will try to be back at least the fifteenth of October.

12. Fulfilling this mission, without doubt you will fully consider its importance and justify the confidence the department puts in your abilities, both by considerate and circumspect activity and the thoroughness of your reports.

The Minister of Public Instruction,
Uwaroff.

The Director of the Department and Vice-Minister,
Prince Shirinski Schichmatoff.

Director of the Third Division of the Department,
Duksta Dykshinsky.

XXXIV.

These instructions were of invaluable importance to me. By the signature of the minister they gave me the guarantee that the religion of my brethren was out of danger; that I alone had not to take the responsibility of this immense task, since four rabbis enjoying the entire confidence of the Jews were to assist in carrying out the schemes of the government; and that in case of the failure of all our calculations I had many reliable witnesses to testify that I had tried my best to ward off every danger, but that both the rabbis and I were thwarted by the autocratic and pitiless will of the emperor.

But in order to strengthen my position I sent a copy of the instructions to the Rev. Dr. Philippson, to have them published in the *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums* as soon as I had come home from the minister's country seat. By this stratagem I intended to confront the Russian policy with the public opinion of Europe, assured that if the European press would hail the good intentions of the Russian government in behalf of my brethren, the same would not dare back out, and make of the reform of the schools a missionary scheme. At the same time I requested Dr. Philippson to discuss with the celebrated Jewish painter, Mr. Oppenheim, of Frankfort-on-the-Main, a plan for a picture to be presented to the emperor by the Jews of Russia, representing him as their benefactor. The Israelites heretofore never had taken recourse to any such plan, while their Karaite brethren never had neglected an opportunity of paying their homage to the imperial family, and always had been richly rewarded for this atten-

tion. I intended by the presentation of this picture to present the Jews in a better light, to prove that they were favoring the educational reforms of the government, while the subject of the picture itself would indicate clearly that the Jews welcomed the reforms and made only the condition that their religion was to be left intact.

The next morning I called at the minister's mansion to take leave and to hear his final instructions. He handed me autograph letters of recommendation to all the states through which I was to travel, as well as letters of the same content to all the school authorities, the order of the Secretary of the Interior, and that of the Chief of Police; and wishing me every success, he told me to be of good cheer, to write at least once every week and dismissed me with a hearty farewell.

At the department I received the sum appropriated for my traveling expenses, my passports and imperial *padoroshnoi,* viz., an order to all the postmasters to furnish horses without delay. Having taken leave of my superiors I hurried home, where all was ready for my departure. Two hours later I passed through the magnificent gate of St. Petersburg.

It was an exceedingly warm July day. The sun was burning with intense heat, and the clouds of dust were whirling lustily around the carriage. I was alone with my hopes, fears and thoughts. I passed in memory the days of agony and despair I had spent in Vilna and Minsk, and felt very uneasy when reflecting what kind of reception would await me on my return. But well aware that I had saved my prejudiced brethren from any fatal conse-

quences; that I had done all in my power to give them a fair guarantee against any infringement of their creed; that I had always pleaded their cause and welfare, without taking notice of my slandered and abused self, I felt almost assured that I would succeed; and having recited a fervent prayer to Him who assists us in all our good intentions, my uneasiness and fear were removed, and with full confidence I looked into the future.

We soon arrived at the next station; but no sooner had I alighted than the driver cried for water, one of the wheels of the carriage being on fire. The heat of the sun and the swiftness of our driving had caused it. It was quickly extinguished, but the repairing caused a few hours' delay before I could continue on my way. I was not displeased with the accident, for during all my life I had noted that every enterprise that proceeded without meeting any difficulties in its beginning turned out a failure in the end; and that every undertaking that was thwarted by many impediments in the beginning at last turned out favorably and surpassed all my expectations.

The wheel having been put in order, I continued my journey, and two days later I arrived at Riga. There I was received by my congregation (I had not yet resigned my office) with the greatest joy and satisfaction. They felt proud that the man whom they had called from Germany and chosen as their leader was selected by the government to carry out the reform for their greatly neglected brethren. They ascribed to themselves and their good intentions all the benefit that was about to result from my mission, and the few days I spent among my beloved

friends and members passed in mutual gratification. The general meeting of the congregation, called by the *Parnass,* Mr. B. Nachman, passed off with grand *eclat;* and resolutions eulogizing the plan of the government were unanimously adopted.

Having presented the minister's letter of recommendation to the governor-general, Count Pahlen, and having assured him that in the states under his jurisdiction I was in no need of the governmental assistance he was so kind to offer me, I started for Mitau, the capital of Kurland.

There, too, my business was soon finished. The *Parnass,* Mr. J. Wagenheim, had made all preparations, expressing the entire satisfaction of the large congregation, before my arrival. I then set out for Vilna. It was a Thursday forenoon when to the astonishment of all my antagonists I alighted at the Jewish hotel of Vilna.

XXXV.

No sooner had I alighted at my hotel than the news spread like fire through the city that the *Datshel* had returned from St. Petersburg, provided with all kinds of official papers and breathing vengeance against those who had resisted him during his last stay in the city. I, however, sent immediately for the *Parnass,* my hypocritical enemy, and after having exchanged the usual questions I ordered him to call a meeting of the trustees of the congregation for the next evening.

When at the appointed time I entered the vestry room it was crowded to the utmost. The men looked gloomy and dismayed, expecting that I would call

them to account for the harsh treatment I had experienced at the hands of the Jews of Vilna. But after taking the front seat at the table I addressed them as follows:

"Brethren, I am aware that you feel uneasy in seeing me return to your city. Believe me that I bear no grudge against anyone. Even if some of my opponents were actuated by personal ill feeling, the large majority who refused to give me their assistance were prompted by the praiseworthy zeal not to see their religion exposed to any danger. I therefore have pleaded your cause before the authorities in the capital, and as far as I was able have succeeded in reconciling our common cause with the wishes of the emperor. His Majesty has consented to give you the privilege of electing your own representatives to the Conference of Rabbis to be convened in St. Petersburg; the Minister of Public Instruction has signed a document declaring that our religion shall be infringed upon in no way and manner; but both being fully determined to carry out the reform of your schools, so long delayed, it is now to your own interest to cease all opposition and to support me with all your power. In order to prove to you that I put implicit confidence in your good sense and honesty, I shall hand over to the *Parnass* all the documents I have received in the department. You may examine them, and tomorrow evening we will discuss who is the man of your choice to represent your cause and your interests at the intended conference."

The men had listened attentively, and on motion of one of the most prominent members the documents were immediately read by the secretary. Their surprise increased after every sentence; their sus-

picion vanished after having heard the kind expression regarding them which the minister had used in the instructions; their mistrust gave way to the warmest acknowledgment of the good services I had rendered to their cause. They rushed up to me, asked my pardon, shook hands heartily with me, bade me friendly welcome, and assured me that henceforth all would turn in my favor. The old men could not praise enough the self-denial and the moderation I had shown in the transaction of this highly important mission; the younger ones extolled the firmness and perseverance with which I had attended to the fulfilment of their hopes; the *Melamdim* who lurked about in the lobby were silenced; and we departed reconciled and good friends.

On the next morning the town talk was of the result of last night's meeting, the honor the government had conferred on me by furnishing me such all-powerful documents, and the uselessness of any further resistance. Caucuses were held in different parts of the city for the nomination of their delegate; and when in the evening we met again the *Parnass* informed me that the man they had selected was Rabbi Itzele, the *Rosh-Yeshibah*[62] of Voloshin. They requested me to stay till after *Rosh Hashanah* with them, during which time they would try their utmost to make amends for the bitter treatment I had experienced in their midst, and would communicate with the old rabbi whether he was willing to accept the nomination, and that after the holidays I should set out for Voloshin to confer with the rabbi himself.

[62] Head of the academy.

Since my arrival in Russia I had heard a good deal of Rabbi Itzele. He was one of the Talmudical authorities in Russia, a man of great worldly tact and experience; a man of rare penetration, who many years before had foreseen the intended reforms and always advocated the necessity of sending a number of Jewish boys to the imperial public schools. I therefore rejoiced at the selection they had made, and assured them that if the rabbi was willing to go his appointment should be ratified by the minister without delay. I also promised them willingly to pass the holidays with them, as I was anxious to witness the celebration of these days in this large Jewish city, and thought to profit in all the other cities I had to pass by the good example set by the Jews of Vilna.

The following Sunday was the first day of *Selichoth*,[63] service to commence at four o'clock a. m. According to my order, my host came already at three o'clock to my room, to hurry me to the synagogue. I hurried into the streets, and what a strange spectacle presented inself to my eyes! An uncommon noise of loud steps arrested my attention, and emerging from all quarters I saw persons enveloped in immense white clothes, with a burning light before them stepping and marching in all directions. I really thought that the resurrection of the dead had made its beginning. Anyone who ever witnessed the remarkable scene in the opera, "Robert le Diable," when Robert is calling the nuns from their graves, and one after another makes her ghastly appearance, must have been convinced that a spectacle of a sim-

[63] Days of supplication during the month preceding New Year's Day.

ilar kind was transpiring in the streets of Vilna. I stood in silent expectation waiting for some of these strange manifestations to come nearer in order that I might be enabled to distinguish whether they were alive or specters. I soon found out that they were the pious ladies of Vilna, who hurried so early to the synagogues. Each of them was provided with a pair of wooden slippers which made such an infernal noise on the pavement; each of them, according to oriental custom, was enveloped in a white linen covering, the upper end of which was fastened to the turban, so that nothing but the face was visible. The spectacle of thousands of women in the deep night, each carrying a burning lantern, made me feel that the whole city seemed to be roused and to form a ghostly procession. After having recovered from my astonishment I went to the synagogue, which was filled well nigh to its utmost capacity.

XXXVI.

During the *Selichoth* days the one hundred synagogues of Vilna were crowded to the utmost, and everybody prepared for the New Year service. Even the business men stayed in the morning a few hours longer in the *Beth Hamidrash,* either to study the Talmud or to listen to the lectures usually delivered there every morning. In the evenings the rich and the poor, the merchant and the tradesman, the aged and the youthful assembled in the numerous places of worship to listen to the lectures of the *Magidim* who were calling the attention of their faithful audience to the approaching day of judgment. Though the schools had been closed since the beginning of

Elul, the children did not run about the streets, but visited the synagogues with their parents, as if the awe and reverence of those days of repentance had already taken hold of their innocent minds. Alms were richly bestowed upon the poor and needy, the benevolent institutions were well supplied, and every man seemed to be resolved upon amending his ways as far as he was able.

During the week the *Parnass* of the congregation received a letter from Rabbi Itzele of Voloshin stating that though bent by old age he was willing to accept the nomination as delegate to the Rabbinical Synod to St. Petersburg, and that he was expecting my visit after the holidays. I immediately informed the minister of the election made by the Jews of Vilna, and having read the letter before the trustees I handed it to the *Parnass* to mail it. This act entirely reinstated me into their confidence, and when on *Rosh Hashanah* I entered the synagogue I was treated with much distinction. The seat usually reserved for the rabbi was pointed out to me, as the rabbi never visited the synagogue, reciting his prayers at home. I was called up to the reading of the *Haphtarah,*[64] a distinction granted only to the eldest or most influential men in the congregation. Yet I was not permitted to recite it myself, except, of course, the *Berachoth*[65] appertaining to it, because that privilege is granted to none, in order not to confound the ignorant. On the second day during the reading of the Law I was invited to come out into one of the vestry rooms of the synagogue, where the oldest benevolent society of Vilna—a highly respected

[64] The prophetical section.

[65] Benedictions.

and revered body—were calling up their members to the Law. I was invited to read a portion of the Bible, an honor considered by the Jews equal to the Grand Cordon of one of the European orders. After that I was called to the synagogue of the late Rabbi Elijahu Gaon, another of the holy places in Vilna, to witness the ceremony of the blowing of the *Shofar*. The rabbi during his lifetime had ordered that no cabalistical prayer whatever be recited in the service of his synagogue, and this command is still strictly observed. Without reciting any prayer calling upon angels, the *Shofar* is blown and thus the ceremony ended.

During the two holidays I was visited and invited by the most prominent members, who gave me all kinds of advice and begged me, when returning from my journey to St. Petersburg, to visit their congregation again, when they would convene the most influential rabbis of the neighboring states either to Vilna or to Minsk, to have a conclusive conference before the starting of the delegates to the capital. I agreed to that proposition, but begged of the trustees to hand me a document in writing expressing their satisfaction with the proposed alterations. I told them to forward it immediately to St. Petersburg, in order to remove the prejudice raised against them by their former opposition. The paper was promised to be handed to me on the following Saturday, as I intended to leave on Saturday night. They promptly complied with their promise, and accompanied by their best wishes and after having taken a hearty farewell, I left at midnight for Voloshin.

I arrived in Voloshin on Sunday afternoon at

three o'clock. It is an unimportant little town, deriving the support of its inhabitants from the large number of Jewish students who attend the renowned *Jeshibah*. Being market day the streets were exceedingly lively, and accosting the first Jew whom I met, I told him to show me to the house of Rabbi Itzele. "Are you the *Datshe Rof?*" was the question addressed to me by a hundred bystanders; and when answering in the affirmative, I saw fifty of them running away in the direction of the rabbi's lodgings to inform him of my arrival. My driver followed them, and five minutes afterwards I alighted at the rabbi's house.

I was received by his son-in-law, Rabbi Lebele, a man of some thirty years, and one of the most celebrated Talmudists in Russia. After having given me a hearty *"Shalom Alechem,"* he excused his father-in-law for not coming out of the house himself, as he was somewhat indisposed.

I entered the rabbi's room. As he wished to receive me in style, he had put on his large hat, and having taken his stick into his hands came to meet me with the utmost cordiality. He was a man of some sixty years of age, rather corpulent, with white hair and beard, sharp eyes and a large forehead. His countenance showed an unusually mild and benevolent temper; sad and bitter experience seemed to have added a large share of wise lessons to his natural ingenuity, and his kind heart taught him how to forgive all the slander and abuse heaped upon him by a large number of envious and jealous men. He spoke the German, Russian and Polish languages very fluently, and though unacquainted with the literature of any of these languages, he understood

very well that the reform of the schools could be delayed no longer, and though feeling somewhat uneasy about the fate that might befall his *Jeshibah,* when these reforms would be carried out, he never hesitated to recommend an alteration of the educational system.

"Welcome, doctor," he addressed me. "I am happy to see you. I hope you will honor us with your visit till after the Day of Atonement, and thus we will have time enough to discuss together all the important subjects now under consideration. But now you are tired. Make yourself at home. Partake of the hearty dinner which I ordered prepared for you in your German style. I will then show you my *Jeshibah,* and in the evening we will take a walk together."

The dinner was soon served, and then the rabbi invited me to say grace. "You pronounce the Hebrew like a proselyte," he remarked smilingly when I had finished the prayer. "I never knew that the difference between the German and Polish pronunciation of the Hebrew is so striking; but though you read it like a proselyte, I consider you a truly good Jew, having the welfare of his people at heart, and making every effort to promote their prosperity."

I thanked the rabbi for his indulgence towards my humble efforts, but begged him, instead of complimenting my undertaking, rather to give me his sound and impartial advice. "I know but too well," I continued, "all the difficulties that are awaiting me when I shall come amongst the *Chassidim,* and being entirely unacquainted with their customs and manners, you would do me a great service by giving me that

information which would assist me in overcoming the threatening obstacles."

"Do not be too hasty; not all at once. We have plenty of time to look after these affairs. Be of good cheer, and with the assistance of God all will turn out right. Come now and I will show you the *Jeshibah*."

The *Jeshibah* was in an immense building opposite the rabbi's house. His father, Chajim, had started the institution. Being poor himself, he had appealed to the liberal and generous feelings of his coreligionists for donations, and his appeal had been liberally responded to. In every city of Russia where Jews were living collectors were appointed to receive the annual subscriptions; messengers, sent by the rabbi, were dispatched yearly to all the congregations to raise the sums required for the support of the institution; and the amounts collected were so large that the rabbi was enabled not only to erect the necessary buildings and to buy the required books, but also to support some three hundred students at his own expense. During the lifetime of the founder, who enjoyed the highest reputation as a scholar and a man among his coreligionists, the institution was in the most flourishing condition. Students from all parts of Russia visited the *Jeshibah* to listen to the excellent lectures of the prominent rabbi. His pupils occupied almost all the rabbinical chairs in the northern provinces and were all men of talent and learning.

"But time and circumstances have changed mightily," said Rabbi Itzele. "The donations do not come in any more as freely as heretofore. It requires all my energy, perseverance and economy to keep the

institution going, and sometimes I am really at a loss how to continue it."

"What large monument is this?" I interrupted the rabbi when passing the cemetery, and perceiving a curious kind of a building.

"It is the grave of my late father. I built this wall around it. It is covered with a copper roof in order that the eternal light, burning under the roof, might not be extinguished. Let us go in, doctor!"

We went in, and I felt struck with awe and reverence. At the head of the grave stood the tombstone with the usual inscription; from the roof was pending a burning oil lamp; on both sides of the wall were almsboxes, richly filled by the visitors, and a holy and earnest tranquility reigned all around. The rabbi, upon entering, leaned against the wall and stood for some minutes in silent and earnest meditation. I did not interrupt him till he himself began saying: "Oh, doctor, these were great and good men. Their time is gone. God knows what will be next!"

We left and turned to the building of the *Jeshibah* without continuing the conversation for some time. "There are not many students here at present," said the rabbi. "Most of them have gone home for the holydays."

XXXVII.

"During the year," continued the rabbi, "we have here in our *Jeshibah* from two to three hundred students. They come from almost every quarter of the northwestern provinces; but the south, where Chassidism has taken fast hold of our brethren, sends a

very limited number. I myself am already too old to give the regular lessons; my son-in-law, Rabbi Lebele, an eminent Talmudist and a young man of great talents, is charged with the task."

"What is the order of lessons you pursue in your *Jeshibah?*"

"We have prayers in the morning as early as possible; all the students have to be present during the service. After the service I explain to them some chapters of the *Sidrah* of the week, and the *Haphtarah* with the commentary of *Rashi,* adding some free explanations of my own, into which I interweave some remarks from the commentary of *Mosheh Dessau* (Mendelssohn). Then the students have to prepare themselves for the regular *Shiur* (section of the Talmud), which is explained to them from ten to twelve o'clock by Rabbi Lebele. In the afternoon they study for themselves till *Minchah,* when they are instructed in the *Poskim* (Codes of Jewish Laws). After supper they continue their private studies till after midnight, some of them remaining in the *Jeshibah* all night, sleeping upon the hard benches in the rooms."

We continued our walk and were soon at the doors of the *Jeshibah.* It was a spacious stone building containing several large halls in which the students were studying. The furniture was of the most ordinary description. Rough long tables surrounded by barren wooden benches, some long shelves filled with a large Hebrew library, an *Aron Hakodesh* with a few *Siphre Torah,* and a pulpit for the reader, was all the furniture within these halls. About twenty or thirty *Bachurim* were present. Some rose and coming up to me gave me the usual *Shalom Alechem;*

others sitting at their *Gemarahs* continued in their study, swaying their bodies forwards and backwards.

"It is time for *Mincha* prayer," said the rabbi, and all of them closing their volumes prepared themselves for the service. The rabbi put on the large hat which he usually wore for the *Jarmeke* (little black velvet cap) is not considered a sufficient head covering for reading the service. After the first *Kaddish,* before the *Shemone Esreh,* when all present had already begun to say their prayer, the rabbi, having stood for some time in earnest meditation, began to sob three times very loudly. He was used to do this daily before the prayer. It made a deep impression upon all the hearers to see the old and venerable man during the service. Without shaking his body, without shouting and screaming, like most of the Polish Jews do, he stood there sunk into deepest devotion, enveloped in his large *Talith,* tears dropping down his cheeks, and his black eyes, beaming with intelligence, directed towards heaven.

After prayer, having participated in a hearty supper, I was invited by the rabbi to take a walk out of the village with him and his son-in-law. It was a fine autumn evening and the old man seemed to relish the fresh air. He was enraptured with the beauties of nature, applied to them the masterly descriptions of the Psalmist, and his remarks convinced me that he was far superior to many of his coreligionists. The others, absorbed in their studies or their business, were entirely unmindful of all that pertains to the province of esthetics; but this man, though living with the simplicity of a patriarch, and never having enjoyed the means of obtaining a worldly education, was gifted by nature with a talent

for all that is good, right and beautiful. After having left the precincts of the village, and being sure that we were out of the reach of any unwelcome listener, he began to converse with me about my mission. I gave him a full statement, and having solicited his sincere cooperation I begged him to assure me at once that he would accept the nomination as delegate to St. Petersburg.

"Certainly, sir," he replied, "I shall go. I wrote to that effect to my friends in Vilna, and shall make all preparations to that end. But you must not suppose, doctor, that all the Jews are putting implicit confidence in my views. They suspect me of leaning towards some reform, of favoring the schemes of the government.

"I have a great many enemies, though they do not dare to avow their animosity openly. They envy my position as chief of this *Jeshibah,* though I assure you it is not to be envied at all. The collections and donations do not come in any longer as liberally as heretofore, and I am worried how to provide for all the poor scholars who flock to this, the only seat of Talmudical learning in Russia."

"But how do you overcome all the difficulties?"

"By patience, doctor, and forbearance. And this is the golden rule I am giving you in behalf of your mission: 'You must prepare yourself for the greatest indulgence and leniency if you aim at success.' Both with the Russian government and our brethren you can not succeed by pressing matters to extremes. Time is the best assistant we can possibly have; time and patience will remedy every evil. Lately I was visited by a wealthy man from Reussen. He had a grudge against me, I do not know why, and in-

sulted me in the presence of my family in the most severe terms. I invited him to follow me into my private study. When there he continued the conversation in the same strain. I hurried out of the room, locked the door behind me, and left him alone with his anger and his excitement. He began to curse and to abuse me, but it was of no avail; he was locked in, and had plenty of room and leisure to give vent to his bad feelings. After a few hours he became more composed and begged with the most friendly words to be released from his prison. Having perceived that he had cooled down, I entered the room and began to reason and to argue with him. My calmness influenced him to listen to argument, and when he left the place we parted as reconciled friends. This is the only way and manner in which you can deal with our Russian people."

During the succeeding days I spent in his company he posted me about the most influential persons I would meet on my journey. Being thoroughly acquainted with the state of Jewish affairs throughout Russia, he was able to give me a store of true information which I could get nowhere else, and I felt highly gratified at having come to this little borough. On the eve of the Day of Atonement he kept himself secluded in his private study. I did not see him till before *Minchah,* when he invited me to follow him to the *Mikveh,*[66] but having heard that all the *Bachurim* and other inhabitants had used the same during the forenoon, I most respectfully declined his offer.

Long before sunset the *Jeshibah* was crowded to

[66] Bath.

the utmost, everyone being anxious to listen to the *Derashah* of the beloved rabbi. He soon made his appearance, and in the Russian-German jargon began his sermon. The whole audience followed the discourse with the utmost attention, and many an eye was filled with sincere tears when the venerable rabbi in glowing words exhorted them to true repentance, rebuking any hypocritical or conventional celebration of the holy day. In the midst of his sermon, according to the custom of the Polish *Darshanim,* he gave the following parable:

"There was once," he said, "a wealthy count. He was accustomed to live isolated on his estates, and hence was entirely unacquainted with worldly affairs. Once he resolved upon setting out and visiting the neighboring city. He stopped in one of the large hotels, where, looking out of the window, he enjoyed watching the different and strange scenes of city life. Accidentally a fire broke out in the city; the bells were rung, and—as is still today customary in Germany—drummers passed through the streets summoning the firemen and citizens to the place of conflagration. Having never seen or heard of a drum, and being soon informed that the fire had been put out, the count thought that by the means of the drum the flames had been extinguished. He therefore ordered one of his attendants to buy so useful an instrument, and having been put in possession of a drum he hurried home, happy and contented. Soon afterwards a fire broke out in his own castle, but instead of ordering his servants to use the water buckets he ordered his drum to be brought, and began to beat it mercilessly. But of course all his drumming was of no avail; water not having been

applied to the fire, the castle was burned down. Thus," remarked the rabbi, "it is with men; on the holiest Day of Atonement they appear in the House of God with the intention of beating their breasts, without shedding the tears of sincere repentance. This beating, brethren, is of no avail. The flames of your sins will consume your soul; nor will tears extinguish the wild fire of lust and transgression that devours your passionate hearts."

The holy day, as usual, was passed in prayer and fasting, and on the next evening, before dismissing the congregation, he blessed all the members of his family and all the *Bachurim.* I also begged him to give me his blessing, and after having pronounced the usual formula, he continued in Hebrew: "May the Lord, the faithful Guardian of Israel, send His angels on your way, and may you return into our midst healthy and of good courage!"

On the following day I made my preparations for setting out for Minsk, where I intended to pass the *Succoth* festival.

XXXVIII.

The news of my arrival spread rapidly through the city of Minsk. Though the inmates of the *Beth Hamidrash,* my principal opponents, had not yet become reconciled to the state of affairs, they were shrewd enough not to show their inimical feelings openly. Private letters from their congenial correspondents in Vilna had informed them of the contents of my official documents, represented to them the leniency and forbearance with which I had treated my former antagonists, told them of the reconcilia-

tion that had taken place between me and the officers of the congregation, and advised them to remain neutral and delay their opposition to a time that promised more success and effect than the present. They therefore kept silent, though watching with a scrutinizing eye every movement I made, every word I uttered. My friends, however, at the head of whom were Mr. Susele Rappoport and Rabbi J. M. Jeshurun, quite enraptured with the success I had obtained, requested me to be of good cheer, as during *Chol-Hammoed* I would surely be put in possession of a document signed by all the leading members of the congregation and expressing their willingness to submit readily to the command of the government.

I therefore passed the holydays rather agreeably. Marks of honor and distinction were poured upon me by all classes and on all occasions. I was invited to be godfather of more than thirty children, all of whom were named after me. The congregational meeting was largely attended, and when, without any mistrust whatever, I handed my important documents to the trustees for examination, as a mark of confidence and reconciliation, resolutions approving my plans were passed unanimously, and a copy for transmission to St. Petersburg presented to me on the following day. Yea, even the *Chassidim,* who heretofore had abstained from any communication with me, at last came forward to participate in the general demonstration.

As early as four o'clock in the morning of *Simchat Torah* a deputation called on me to see me. I was still fast asleep when my servant Getz, a Polish Jew, and the most faithful creature under God's heaven, of whom more hereafter, came into my room

to awake me, stating that some Polish Jews urgently requested to be admitted. I thought some misfortune had occurred, and, as had happened several times since my departure from St. Petersburg, they had come to beg for my interference with the officials. I hurried, therefore, out of bed, and stepping into the room in which two old and fine-looking men were waiting for me, I addressed them: "Brethren, what is the matter? What brings you here so early? Can my services be of any use to you?" "We are the *Gabaim* of the *Chassidim-Stuebel* (synagogue of the *Chassidim*)," they replied, "and have been deputed by our members to beg you to accept the *Mitzvah* of *Chathan-Torah*[67] in our *Stuebel.* Fearing lest some other congregation, by offering you the same *Mitzvah,* would deprive us of the intended honor, we come rather early and hope that you will not refuse us." I expressed my sincere thanks for this unexpected mark of attention, and as I had promised to be in the *Beth Hamidrash* during *Shacharit,* I requested them to send for me before the beginning of *Keriath Hatorah.* Highly pleased with my acceptance of their offer, they assured me that it would do me a great deal of good when the *Chassidim* of the neighboring states would be informed of my having been *Chathan-Torah* in their synagogue.

At nine o'clock two messengers from the *Stuebel* appeared in the *Beth Hamidrash* summoning me thither. I followed them and was introduced to the congregation, which was awaiting my arrival. The room was not a very large one; the pews stood in

[67] Bridegroom of the law.

the greatest disorder along the walls and round the *Bimah;* the *Aron Hakodesh,* though quite large, was made of wood. Some old men, enveloped in their *Talith,* came to meet me, while about twenty young men had taken their places upon the *Bimah* to accompany, with wild clapping of hands and confused melodies, the usual circuit with the *Torah.* I was offered a *Talith* and requested to recite the first verse of the prayer that is said before the opening of the *Hechal.* They seemed well pleased with my reading, and expressed their satisfaction with the courtesy with which I yielded to their customs, which were entirely strange to me. Some of the old men, having taken the *Seforim* out of the Ark, made then the first circuit round the *Bimah.* The procession then stopped, while the three oldest men, in front of the Ark, entwined their right arms and began to dance in the most enthusiastic manner; the choir upon the *Bimah* accompanied them with wild clapping and the singing of a profane melody in which all the members present joined. There was general mirth and confusion, but not without sincere devotion. They were dancing in imitation of King David (who is reported to have danced before the Holy Ark), and enjoying the feast of the *Torah,* according to their eccentric views, in the most effective and glorious style. The circuits and dances were repeated three times; the *Seforim* put back in the *Hechal,* and then the oldest among them accosted me, asking how I liked this ceremony. I answered him that I never had witnessed anything like it before, that I was too little acquainted with their system and their peculiar notions to form an opinion, but that anyhow I was pleased to see them happy and contented.

The service then continued, and after a very large number of members had been called to the Thorah, I was invited to finish the reading of the Pentateuch as *Chathan Torah*. When the reading was finished the sexton came up to the *Bimah* and presented me, the reader, and the *Gabai* with a large cup of brandy, which was drunk to my health. I begged to be excused, having not yet made sufficient progress in the art of enjoying alcohol; but my request was of no avail. It was one of the honors and privileges of the *Chathan-Torah* to drink the health of the congregation, and I was compelled to comply with their wishes. *Chathan-Bereshith* was treated in the same way, and mirth and frolic were continually on the increase. I left the service soon after, rather bewildered with the strange and new impressions.

My host, Mr. Rappoport, was anxiously awaiting my return from the *Stuebel,* and at dinner we had a lively discussion about the future prospects of this new Jewish sect which was spreading rapidly throughout the southern and western provinces in which the Jews are permitted to live. They were beginning to gain a foothold even in the northeastern provinces, which heretofore had remained free of this fanatical sect; and their Talmudical opponents, the *Misnagdim,* were highly displeased with the intrusion of these sectarian eccentricities.

In the afternoon I was invited to attend a party given by Mr. Lurie, the *Chathan-Torah* of the *Beth Hamidrash*. All the rabbis and Talmudical authorities had been invited; the officers and other influential members of the congregation were present; some Jewish improvisators or *"Marshalliks"* were in attendance, who by their ingenuous wit applied to

Bible and Talmud, held the company in a continuous uproar of laughter, and finally the cantor with his assistants regaled the party with his best *Yomim-Noroim-Niganim*.[68] Wine, brandy and sweets were served in abundance, and towards evening the *Samovar* (tea machine) was brought in and then the mirth and frolic were renewed in style. The Russian never feels happy unless he has champagne or tea; as the Jews drink no champagne, considering it to be *Nesech*,[69] they regale themselves with tea, of which they drink at least ten or twelve glasses a day. And the tea was excellent, indeed; its flavor, which tea retains only when transported by land, but loses when carried on ship, spread through the rooms and exhilarated the whole company. The *Marshalliks*, being in higher spirits, renewed their fun and wit; the *Lamdim* exhibited a store of new Torah; the *Gewirim* (rich men) sent for more wine, and the *Simchath Thorah*[70] was celebrated with all becoming ceremonies.

Shortly before midnight I left the company, hurrying home tired and fatigued by the exertions of the day. No sooner had I alighted than a new kind of serenade was brought to me. The *Chassidim* assembled before the house *en masse*, and in honor of their *Chathan-Torah* began to sing and dance, to shout and to enjoy themselves in their own fashion. Being better acquainted with their customs than my-

[68] Melodies used on the great days, New Year and the Day of Atonement.

[69] Forbidden wine.

[70] The Day of Rejoicing in the Law; a holiday celebrated the day after the Feast of Conclusion (the closing day of the Feast of Tabernacles).

self, my host sent down to them all the brandy and cakes he had in the house. Cheer upon cheer ensued, till all the bottles were emptied; continuing their visits to the houses of some other friends, they departed highly pleased with the *Datsch-Rebbi,* who had treated and entertained them with so much courtesy.

BYALYSTOK AND BREST-LITOVSK.

XXXIX.

Having been handed the required documents by the trustees of the congregation expressing their readiness to support the plan of the government, and having promised on my part, after my travels through the different provinces to return to Minsk, where a council of the most influential members of Lithuania should be convened for the purpose of coming to a final understanding before the departure of the delegates to St. Petersburg, I left Minsk, reconciled with a portion of my enemies, greatly encouraged by the success I had obtained, and without having met any opposition at the hands of my silenced enemies.

By the advice of some of my friends, I had engaged a Jewish servant to accompany me on my journey. Being obliged sometimes to travel day and night before reaching a city in which I had to stop, it was rather tedious to be awakened four or five times during one night to pay for the horses and to have my passport recorded at every postoffice. By the assistance of a faithful servant, to whom I could entrust these matters, I was told that I could sleep

quietly in my carriage, without troubling myself with such trifles. The name of my servant, who was recommended to me as a faithful, honest, young man, was Getz, and truly a more devoted soul I never met with. Dressed in his long *Schubetze* and in his lamb fur, he sat with the driver watching all his movements, that no accident should befall us. He took charge of my wardrobe, and with more minuteness than any good housekeeper kept it always in perfect order. I handed him my money, and where and whenever he could save a penny, he felt as happy as if he had made the greatest bargain for himself. When we came among the *Chassidim,* who, it was falsely rumored, had said that they would try to poison me, he tasted all the victuals before they were served. When people in the different places besieged me with their requests and advices, without paying any regard to old age, influence or wealth, at the appointed hour he stepped into the room, ordered me to go to bed, and dismissed the people in order that the continuous fatigue might not undermine my health. I was so accustomed to put such implicit confidence in his tried fidelity that I was entirely under his control, leaving to him the full management of my private affairs.

We started from Minsk for Byalystok. This city is beautifully located, the seat of the provincial government, and inhabited by a great many Jews. But they enjoy neither the reputation for learning of those in Vilna, nor the independent spirit of those in Minsk. They are engaged in all kinds of commercial and industrial pursuits, and take no important part in public Jewish affairs. I experienced no opposition whatever. The man of paramount im-

portant influence is Itzele Sabludowski. Being of poor parents and no education, by indomitable will and persevering energy he has acquired an independent fortune. Trading in lumber, which he exports to foreign countries or provides to all kinds of governmental buildings, he is known throughout the empire and greatly respected by all the officers. He has built for himself a palace which would be an ornament to the finest quarter, the Faubourg St. Germain in Paris. I was shown through a long line of the finest apartments, luxuriously furnished, and decorated with paintings and all kinds of unnecessary ornaments. But I was quite bewildered when I entered his concert-salon. It was furnished with the whitest and richest marble, embellished with excellent statues, rich chandeliers, beautiful curtains and the finest sofas and chairs. I could not believe that the Polish Jew, with his long, brown beard, with his *Schubetze* and fur cap, with his broken jargon, was indeed the proprietor of this modern and princely mansion. I am sure that neither the Rothschilds nor the Pereiras or any other of the moneyed aristocracy has a salon arranged with more taste and splendor than my Jewish host in Byalystock. He told me that having visited the watering places in Germany, he had seen many of the finest establishments of this kind, and when he returned from his journey he saved neither trouble nor expense to imitate the best in true and becoming style.

I was treated in a princely manner in his house, where I made the acquaintance of all the well-educated members of his family, and of his daughter-in-law, a born Klatczko, of Vilna, who was one of the renowned beauties in Lithuania. He thought a great

deal of her, and was pleased in seeing his palace embellished with this beauty.

In the afternoon he introduced me to the governor and other high officers of the state, who kindly offered me their services, but I declined them most respectfully, as I met with no opposition whatever. The example given by the congregations of Vilna and Minsk, and the agreeable tidings that Rabbi Itzele of Voloshin had accepted the nomination as delegate having made a good impression, resolutions were passed unanimously in favor of my plan at the general meeting of the congregation and the required documents were willingly handed to me for remittal to St. Petersburg.

I started a few days afterwards for Brest-Litovsk. It is the last city in the western provinces where the Talmudists are in the majority and exercise an efficient influence against the doings of the *Chassidim*. I was well received by the congregation of that place. The young men, imbued with a better spirit and mostly well bred, tried their best to entertain me as well as possible. They introduced me to the commander of that mighty fortress, who appointed one of his officers to show me the *nouveautees* in town. They entertained me very agreeably also in the evening, but when taking leave of me (I departed early in the morning) many of them could not restrain their tears. They expressed their uneasiness that they entertained but a faint hope of seeing me again, and had apprehensions of my future ill luck, as I was now entering provinces chiefly inhabited by *Chassidim*. They begged me to be very careful when tasting my meals, as I should be mindful of the awful fate of the Rev. A. Kohn, who had been pois-

oned in Lemberg, and entreated me to stop nowhere on the road, but to hasten to Dubno, and to remain in that place over Sabbath, Dubno being inhabited by a more enlightened class of Jews than the surrounding cities; besides some families resided there who were inspired by a better spirit than the majority of the fanatic and bigoted *Chassidim*. I was deeply moved and passed a sleepless night, yet my courage revived when in the morning my carriage with four horses drove up to the house I occupied.

Before I continue the extracts from my traveling diary, I will give the reader a description of the numerous and remarkable sect of the *Chassidim*, their origin, customs and manners.[71]

[71] This closes Dr. Lilienthal's published account of his travels in Russia. All trace of his diary which he mentions here has been lost. This is indeed regrettable, as this sketch of travels of which we possess only the fragment here reproduced is not only interesting and fascinating, but gives a fine presentation of Jewish life in Russia at the time.

LETTERS AND ADDRESSES.

LETTERS AND ADDRESSES.

LETTERS ON REFORM

ADDRESSED TO THE REV. I. LEESER.

I.

THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

Cincinnati, Nov. 24, 1856.

In the last number of your valuable *Occident* you have thrown down the gauntlet to me for a contest on *the Principles of Reform*. I willingly take it up. You are, in our opinion, a champion worthy of our utmost attention and fully able to defend his conservative principles; an Israelite who, as sincerely as we on the other side, has at heart only the welfare of our holy religion, its future success and prosperity. All these personal qualities will render the contest as interesting to the combatants as it is useful to the readers, who after having heard both parties will be sufficiently enlightened to give an impartial verdict.

You will agree with me (for matters of fact can not be contested) that Reform, nowadays, has gained so much ground that it can not be haughtily overlooked nor indignantly disregarded. It has become one of the important questions of the day, claiming our sincere consideration and earnest attention. It penetrates into the council of French Grand Rabbis, extends its dominion in England (Burton-Street Synagogue and Manchester), though still under the excommunication

of the late Chief Rabbi, Dr. Herschel; it governs with potent sway in Germany, its native country. It is imported into America, claiming the rights of acknowledgment, and, in the whole civilized world, has become a mighty factor, the influence of which can not be warded off either by taking no notice of it, or by heaping slander, calumny and suspicion on its followers.

Nor can we despise and decry it as the offspring of license or atheism, for it numbers in its ranks men of the highest standing in the community, known for their charitable disposition, respected for their unblemished character in private life, revered for every virtue that distinguishes them as citizens and members of society, and men whose piety and morality no one will doubt, eminent for their learning and proficiency in Jewish and common literature. Men who have brought and are ready to bring any sacrifice for the good cause of religion are among its leaders, are its most able champions, and by action try to prove the sincerity of their religious opinion.

Nor can we nickname the process of Reform "a child of religious indifference," for never was the Jew, through all the layers of society, more proud of his religion and less unwilling to give it up than in our times. The innumerable efforts made to restore the synagogue to its original glory, to establish Jewish charitable and educational institutions on a large scale, to raise the Jewish name in every department of human society to its proper standard, prove more than sufficiently that religious indifference is not at the root of Reform, and that other causes are producing those astonishing effects. Not as forty years ago does the Jew wish to Christianize his life and

religion, but struggles to make it respected in itself so that, recognized at its proper value, it may command the respect of the civilized world.

Nor can you call it only a fleeting and temporary process that, swept away by the rolling waves of time, will leave no other trace but an unsavory memory. Steadily and perseveringly it has pursued its onward march since the days of Mendelssohn, uprooting the most obstinate prejudices, abolishing the most inveterate customs, changing the most endeared opinions. Its continuous work is felt everywhere; its signal defeat is no longer foretold with the same certainty as heretofore, and concessions are made to the young giant in every quarter. If it is to be fairly understood, we must endeavor to comprehend its origin, its laws and its aims, in order to learn how to use and how to handle this new lever in our history.

But in order to obtain this clear and fair understanding, we must be clear as to the difference of principles from which we start. You deny to Reform any legitimate and justified existence. Instead of searching after the historical causes that produced these manifestations of our time, you nickname the whole process a mere effervescent action of some irreligious individuals, or a fashionable change of the divine service, or the demands of some half-educated atheists, or the declamations of some egotistical infidels. If your assertions, in any way or shape, could be maintained, you certainly would be in the right; for on such a foundation no permanent structure could be erected.

But we take quite a different view of the pending question. We call the process of Reform "the spirit of the age, the proper and just demand of our time."

We see in it no principle of infidelity, no ephemeral manifestation of atheism, no concessions made to everchanging fashion, but the legitimate and logical consequence of the ideas that are governing all the departments of our social life, and from the influence of which, religion, its highest province, can not escape. And these ideas, representing "the spirit of the age" date their origin not from today or yesterday, but their natural and historical origin, growth and continuous development, with great certainty and logical consequence can and have to be traced through the past periods of history. For history is no fragment, but merely a series of logical causes and effects. The history of every nation is influenced and influences that of other nations; by this mutual action and reaction the work of universal history is performed. The spirit of universal history will be reflected in that of every nation just as the specific history of the latter can be discovered in the great complex of history. And only by searching after this historical cooperation, by comprehending it in this its connection between the past, present and future, will we be enabled to understand and appreciate the meaning and importance of "the spirit of the age," and be prevented from condemning it with the most slanderous superficiality. Hence, I invite you to a historical and philosophical investigation of this spirit.

If then we question what was the "spirit of the age" after the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem up to 1815, i. e., the age in which the Jews, driven from their seclusion in Palestine, came in contact with the nations of Europe, of the age in which the Catholic Church celebrated its period of unrivaled victories, in one word, what was the spirit of the mid-

dle ages, we must answer: the absolute supremacy of the Catholic Church and its clergy, and in order to maintain it the absolute subjugation of reason and free investigation under the yoke of fixed and unchangeable dogmatic rules.

Since its acknowledgment as the religion of the state by Constantine the Great; since the appointment of the Bishop of Rome as Supreme Pontiff by Valentinian and Gratian; since the acknowledgment of the superiority of the clergy over all worldly power and government by Justinian, the Catholic Church had understood very well to make all worldly affairs dependent upon the clerical government, and to use the worldly power for its own interest and glorification. All was done in the name and behalf of the church, *ad majorem Dei ecclesiaeque gloriam,* and in order to maintain this supremacy, false to the intention of the founder who had given no dogma, the Catholic Church issued an entire and complete creed, the least doubt in the infallibility of which was declared heresy, and punished with all the might at the disposal of the mother church. The study of the Bible was prevented, free investigation considered the devil's work, historical investigation prohibited, and the blindest faith in the authority of the church doctrines most strictly enacted and required. Reason with its divine and eternal functions was discharged; science, the results of which came in conflict with the established principles of the church, had to suffer at the stake and the rack; any free movement was considered to be a revolution against the clerical and worldly governments instituted *Dei gratia;* and the natural result of all these causes was on one hand absolute intellectual stagnation, and on the other hand

the impossibility of a lasting existence of such a state in open contradiction to the higher law of God.

Jewish contemporary history is the reflex of the spirit of the age. It is true that the rabbis can not be accused of hierarchical ambition or frivolous licentiousness like the priests of that time, for they were poor, powerless and the patterns of morality and of piety. It is still more true that a well-digested and well-planned intention of subjugating and discharging the functions of reason and free investigation can not be imputed to the rabbis, the principal actors of the medieval drama, for they established free schools in every quarter of their exile, and declared instruction and learning to be an imperative religious duty. It also can not be contested that among the Jews the learning of the clergy and the ignorance of the large masses was never intended; for the books of Scripture and rabbinical literature were open to everyone; and every father as well as every congregation was religiously bound to have the children of the rich and the poor instructed; hence it certainly can not be denied that the Jewish history of those times far transcends that of the coeval and coexisting nations; a difference which I acknowledge with pride and satisfaction. But in spite of this diametrical difference the result of the medieval, intellectual history of the Jews favored entirely the universal "spirit" of those times by which it was influenced and shaped: and this result reached the climax, both affirmatively and negatively, in the works of the renowned Rabbi Moses ben Maimon.

The entire study was made subservient to religion, and the Talmud, though a complex of theology, medicine, anatomy, jurisprudence, etc., is the result of the

intellectual work of that time. A canon, like the canon law of the Catholic clergy, was begun by Alfasi, and brought into form and shape by Maimonides in his *Jad Hachazaka,* though the Talmud had never intended such a final conclusion of the system. Not unlike the dogmas of the church, a creed was sketched and formed by the same Maimon in his "thirteen articles", and though strongly opposed by Albo and his followers was adopted by the majority and recognized as the standard by which the orthodoxy of the Jews had to be tested. But when, after having enslaved the principles of free investigation and confined them within a narrow limit of dogmatic theology, the same rabbi attempted to free them from the fetters which he himself had imposed on them, his *Moreh,* by which this end was to be attained, was burned at the stake, and the authority of blind faith and the faith in established authority were fully reinstated and secured.

The consequences were the same as in the Catholic world—complete intellectual stagnation degenerating into cabbalistical mysticism or the most subtile and resultless polemics. The absurdities of scholasticism and its method of dialectical reasoning found an echo in Jewish literature; the spirit of the medieval age had achieved the victory, and subjugated the Hebrew province too.

II.

THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

Cincinnati, Dec. 4, 1856.

I hope, dear sir, we will have entered the lists *sine ira et studio*. I respect every man who uses his intellectual powers to the perfection of his conviction, though the results of this reasoning may widely differ from those I have reached. "Such convictions," says Heine, "are individual sanctuaries; by virtue of them the educated man rises above the surface of daily life, distinguishing himself visibly from the mass below him that comfortably join all those who save them the troublesome business of thinking."

I concluded in my last with the remark, that "the spirit of the middle ages" had to give way to "the spirit of the succeeding age," that dates from the time of the Reformation and extends to the French Revolution. We perceive, thereby, such a mighty change, such a wide difference "of the spirit of the ages," that there is no room left for entertaining the least doubt, that "the spirit of the age" is not a visionary imagination in the heads of some fantastic or eccentric individuals. No, we have to grant that it has some substantial reality, the influence of which can neither be underrated nor warded off by the ostrich policy to take no notice of it. We perceive that the march of the human race is steadily onward, tending to a higher degree of development, and that neither the clerical nor the worldly power is strong enough to retard the turn of the mighty wheel. Action will set it in motion, and reaction—which we are used to regard as retrogression—is nothing but rest

from exhaustion, during which period the spirit of the human race is gathering new strength for a further progressive step. There are always some great and glorious "ideas" at the bottom of the motions forming the character of human history. They are the manifestations of the new spirit, and that of the Reformation differs so entirely from that of the preceding age that its existence and reality can be denied in no wise.

Having been prepared by the taking of Constantinople, that sent Greek science and literature into the western part of the continent, by the invention of gunpowder, that annihilated the ridiculous superiority claimed by bodily strength, by the invention of printing, that made the purchase of books accessible to all classes of society, and by the unwillingness of princes (Henry VIII of England and Louis the Bavarian) longer to submit to the arbitrary government of the pope; having been accelerated by the disunion in the Roman councils, by the universally acknowledged necessity of a reform of the church in its head and members, and by the abuses of church privileges, sanctioned by the magnificent Pope Leo, the spirit of the age took shape and form in the manly and stout appearance of Luther. With the ninety-nine theses he nailed to the gates of the university of Wittenberg, he nailed and doomed to ruin the principles of popish supremacy. Out of the fire in which he burned the pope's bill of excommunication and the canon law, he ordered the human intellect to rise like a new-born phoenix; and in the pamphlet he addressed "to the Christian nobility of the German nation," he uttered the remarkable words: "Written laws are under the control of reason," and "at all and every time

reason must dictate what is law, and remain itself the supreme law and the source of all right."

This reinstalment of reason and intellect into its natural and divine right, and its deliverance from the yoke and bondage of inherited authority, is the distinguishing character of the "spirit of the age." Its natural consequences were the removal of blind faith in a priest's dictates; the critical examination of every pretended authority; a free investigation of the Bible, and an unexpected revival of all knowledge and science.

The Jewish rabbis of that time with their usual sagacity at once understood the importance of that movement; they called it "a portion of the Messiah;" they comprehended well that when the Catholic Church was once forced to become false to its principles of religious intolerance—for she knew but of a conversion, and not of a legal acknowledgment of her opponents—the morning of a time improving the Israelites' political condition was dawning, and hence in their isolated ghettos they hailed the spirit of the Reformation as sincerely as the Protestants.

But they had not the least foreboding, not the least idea of the influence, this religious movement in course of time would exercise on their own religious views and sentiments. They did not dream that the spirit of the Reformation that had battered such a formidable breach into the fortified structure of the Catholic Church would do the same with all other denominations as soon as it was entirely understood, and had taken root in the consciousness of men. They had first to be politically admitted into human society before the spirit, moving, shaking and tossing the same, could reach them. They were still too much

secluded from the political arena of the world to be influenced by the great drama that was performed there.

In their dark and gloomy abodes, into which the sun could not shed its golden rays of a higher civilization, the Jews were allowed to remain for another century under the government of the spirit of the middle ages. It required some time before the Christian world, overbusy with its own affairs, could find leisure for directing its attention to the Jews. "The good," says Arndt, "shall not achieve its victory as quickly as the flight of the human thought desires, in order that it may coalesce the more closely with the entire man." Both the literature and legislature of Europe had to experience a radical change, before "the spirit of the age" could manifest its effects on our coreligionists.

But if history should not prove false to itself, the principles of the Protestant Reformation, founded on the innate and inalienable right of reason, had to extend its influence over the province of every denomination in the course of time, and with logical consequence did the best "Protestant" authors of Germany fulfil this mission toward the Jews. Lessing in his *Nathan, The Fragments of Wolfenbüttel,* and the *Education of the Human Race,* Herder in all his numerous classical works, Dohm in his renowned *Memorandum,* Klopstock in his *Ode to the Emperor Joseph,* and Kant in his philosophical writings, advocated the principles of religious liberty, not only in behalf of the human race in general, but especially in behalf of the Jews; and by the dispensation of the world-governing Providence two of the most liberal minded princes the world ever saw were sitting on two of the

mightiest thrones of Europe, to approve and to confirm by their legislative power the demands of science and reason. Frederick of Prussia and Joseph of Austria are the immortal names that achieved the religious emancipation of the Jews.

But as all written charters and laws are of but very little effect, if they are not rooted in the hearts of the people, finding therein their origin and their echo, these steps taken by literature and legislature would have proved to be of but very little avail, if "the spirit of the age" would not have begun its glorious work among the Jewish people itself; and the same all-kind Providence that had awakened these liberal sentiments among the Christian nations at the same time gave to the Jewish people their Mendelssohn, with the public activity of whom the spirit of the Reformation was introduced into the Jewish life.

Mendelssohn was no reformer, and his best philosophical writings can not be quoted as an authority in behalf of Reform. Mendelssohn was to the succeeding Jewish Reform what the taking of Constantinople had been to the Christian Reformation. It banished ignorance, extended the sphere of science beyond the limits of theology, prepared the human mind for a free use of all intellectual powers and leveled the barriers that prevented the Jew from free intercourse with his Christian fellow citizen. The prohibition to read and study the תרפה פטול was abolished; the system of education and instruction that had been confined to the study of the Talmud and rabbinical literature, soon changed into a complete accommodation to that of the European system; the old ideas and forms began to give way to new ones, thereby

preparing the way for another change that was required by the "spirit of the succeeding age."

This movement of introducing the Jews into the brotherhood of universal civilization—a movement approved of nowadays by every person of enlightened mind, be he reformer or conservative—at the time of Mendelssohn and his school, was condemned with the same indignation with which your party in our time condemns the principles of Jewish Reform. Ban and excommunication and all other means at the disposal of the Jewish rabbis were used against the great man; the most passionate controversy was carried on against his German translation of the Bible and his other writings, and Judaism was declared to be in the most imminent danger. But the spirit of the age could be neither subdued nor silenced by antiquated ideas and fanatic, unreasoning outcries. The spirit continued its victorious march onwards, sealing the fate of the opponents, and its wholesome influence is now gratefully acknowledged by every Jewish heart. Mendelssohn has won the laurel of immortality; the names of his opponents have sunk into deserved oblivion.

But, dear sir, as all the ideas forming the moving springs of history are absolute, while man's life and actions are confined within the limited sphere of time and space, so is human history as a whole a continuous process of freeing itself from the deficiency of the latter, a continuous progress of an unceasing reform, and a never-stopping development to a higher degree of perfection. As soon as history has reached one point, it detects the inherent deficiency and strives to remedy it by a new effort. It takes centuries before mankind wins an accurate consciousness of that

which is needed. It reveals itself in the beginning as a mere latent "sentiment;" it progresses and grows then to a clear and distinct "idea;" and by means of a peaceable or bloody revolution "as action" becomes then the property of the human race.

This truism is proved by the "spirit of the age" that succeeded that of the Reformation, and by the influence of which our present life in every direction is shaken to its very foundation.

III.

THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

Cincinnati, Dec. 10, 1856.

You will excuse these historical precursory digressions. Though not aiming directly at the point at issue, I can not do without them if I want to prove the one cardinal point, that you are entirely wrong in ascribing the present movement of Jewish Reform to a mere temporary invention of some eccentric heads, and not on the contrary to the logical consequence of "the spirit of the age," in which we are living.

The spirit of our age tries to realize still more completely than the preceding one, and in every direction of life, the ideas originated and engendered by the Reformation. It was prepared by the still unsurpassed *Esprit des lois* of Montesquieu and the numerous writings of the Encyclopedists in France, and Kant and his followers in Germany; and when Rousseau began his campaign against the corruption of his time, and Voltaire derided the priestly deception of Rome and the divine right of royal despotism constructed thereon, and Lafayette returned from Amer-

ica with the golden fleece of a free constitution—then was born the new spirit of the supreme government of reason, of the innate and inalienable right of men that still today is only in its glorious infancy.

Now began the age of revolution. The commanded belief in any traditional authority, clerical or political, was dethroned, and a furious contest began between established right and custom, and the "demands of the time." The first pointed to their old books and titles; the latter refused to acknowledge any historical necessity in contradiction with the highest ideas of truth and justice. This contest, continued now openly, now secretly, is still going on with all its might, creating all the present uneasiness in Europe; and, in spite of all the Machiavellian machinations of priests, kings and nobles there will be concluded no definite peace before truth and reason have been fully reinstated in their divine right.

Both you and I acknowledge gratefully the change this spirit has wrought in the political and social condition of our brethren, for it was the birthday of our emancipation. You hail with me the glorious morning which reduced to ridiculous nothingness the nightly specters of fanatical prejudices, and broke down the barriers that separated man from man.

But you deplore the influence this spirit has exercised on our religious life; you complain of the breach it has battered in the belief in tradition; you condemn the free inquiry that comes in opposition to established customs. You like the cause, but disapprove of its effects; nay, you would approve of them as far as they affect our political condition, but refuse them any title as soon as they approach the province of religion.

This illogical proceeding on your part is too striking to need any refutation. Natural or historical causes will and must produce their legitimate effects, and it is beyond the reach of any human power either to control or to destroy them. We Reformers, therefore, perceive in the process of Jewish Reform nothing but a legitimate offspring of the spirit of our age, and find therein the true reflex of all the elements pervading our present society. As in all the other departments of human knowledge a critical school has been established, winnowing the chaff from the corn, thus in Jewish literature, too, by the eminent writings of Rapoport and Zunz, a critical school has been organized that deprives many a revered head of his halo and many a statute book of its authenticity or legal authority. As in all the other branches of science a historical and a rational school are contending for the correctness of their views, thus in the Jewish province, too, by Geiger and a host of others, the same contest has been called into existence. As in the Christian religion numerous sects, and especially the German Catholics, have sprung up, to break with the medieval spirit of the militant church, and to establish another one fit for the united brotherhood of reasoning mankind, thus in the synagogue, too, Reform has been instituted to break down medieval power and to accomplish the prophet's words: "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples."

Having thus stated the supreme difference of our opinions, permit me to draw the following conclusions, the correctness of which you can not deny:

1. The spirit of the age is not as you have repeatedly stated in your valuable *Occident,* the production of some frivolous, irreligious and eccentric

minds, but is founded on the natural development of history, as effected under the guidance of divine Providence, and has a true substance.

2. Being thus justified before the tribunal of reason, our religious life in its totality has to undergo the same critical trial and to experience the same revolutions as all other departments of our society, if Judaism shall not remain behind the movements of the time, and

3. That the influence of this spirit can not be warded off either by taking no notice of it or by condemning and underrating it, but by reconciling the demands of the time with the eternally true spirit of religion.

These three theses will explain to you the frequent use the Reformers are making of the terms "spirit of the age" and "demands of the time." They are neither invented nor advanced as a mere pretext for frivolous purposes, but stubborn matters of fact that can not be overlooked, and must be properly considered and carried out for the most holy interests of our religion.

From the standpoint you, dear sir, and your party are occupying, there are but two ways of maintaining your opposition. If you agree with the hyperorthodox party in Bavaria, Baden and in Prussia, in decrying the spirit of the age as wicked and impious, you must, to be consistent, declare the full emancipation of the Jews to be incompatible with their religion. Thereby cause and effect are declared to be frivolous and illegal, but you can not be accused of being illogical. But you are well aware that the denial of the influence of a historical matter of fact is a mere self-deceiving illusion, void of any lasting foundation.

Hence, such voices are but the dying echo of bygone ages, finding no sympathy in the hearts of the living generation. Without debate or investigation this opinion is derided as obsolete, and the best energies of our best men are directed towards obtaining our full rehabilitation as men and citizens. The honor every Jew owes to his name, history and religion prompt him to try his best for this holy cause; for every one is fully, though perhaps unconsciously aware, that true religion can not be in opposition to the highest ideas of life. This ground, then, for condemning the spirit of the age and its effects, can not, and was never taken by you, as you always have shown yourself a true and faithful advocate of the political rights of the Jewish people.

But in order to justify your opposition against Reform, you say: "By the proceedings of Reform first, the unity of Israel, bequeathed through centuries as a sacred heritage, has been broken, an event that threatens to endanger our future religious existence; secondly, there are the Bible and the divine tradition embodied in our rabbinical codices, dearer unto us than all emancipation, and as long as they have not been repealed by the divine Lawgiver Himself, we have no right to change one iota thereof, and all demands of your spirit of the age have to yield before the divine law."

This is your assertion and hence your opposition to Reform. We will in our next examine your views with the utmost impartiality.

IV.

UNION AND USAGES.

Cincinnati, Dec. 16, 1856.

I am going to examine the objections you are raising against Reform. I shall confine myself either to matters of fact or your own principles, without giving for the present, explicitly those of the Reformers: these, on their broadest scale, I shall explain hereafter. I will sum up your views in the following sentences:

1. By the progress of Reform the Union of Israel, existing for so many centuries, is endangered.

2. Our Bible and tradition, as embodied in our standard rabbinical codices, are against the destructive principles of Reform, hence the latter have to yield to the former.

In answer to your first objection: the Union, in the sense you are taking it, as the uniform abiding of all Israel by the dictates collected in our codices, is not only endangered but actually gone. This division was the logical consequence of the difference of principle of the two parties. Your party rests on the medieval principle of authority; the Reform party on the acknowledgment of reason, as declared by the spirit of the age. Your party is founded on the unlimited belief in tradition; the Reform party on the results of critical and historical investigation. Your party claims equal right and title for all our biblical, traditional and rabbinical codices; the Reform party denies this. Your party asserts that Judaism must remain confined within the limits of its national particularity; the Reform party maintains

that according to its Messianic ideas, Judaism has to lead the van in order to accomplish the acknowledgment of the only "One" by the whole human race. Your party expects the fulfilment of this prophetic promise from some supernatural occurrence; the Reform party asserts that in the general development of the human race and the dutiful cooperation of men, the ways and means are given for attaining this sublime aim and end.

Hence, the difference is one of principles, and a union, in your sense, has become a sheer impossibility. You can not force to comply with ceremonies those who have lost the religious meaning thereof no more than you can urge those who still revere them as a part of their religion, to disobserve them. It is neither stubborn obstinacy on your part that prompts you to do as you are doing, nor frivolous irreligiosity that induces the Reformers to act in their own way. Both parties do according to the best of their knowledge and the utmost of their sincerity. But they are diametrically opposed, and each acting independently of the other will pursue its diverging course. The one party does not expect and will not be satisfied with a gracious concession or an insignificant yielding of the other party, but relying and trusting in its respective right and strength, each of them will pursue its own way, leaving the final decision to the future. While nearly all men advanced in age and led by endeared customs and habits stay with your party, almost the entire rising generation will join that of the Reformers; for your party is living in the glories of the past while the Reformers are enjoying the bright anticipations of the future.

Hence, all efforts to effect a reconciliation have

proved abortive; and though undertaken with the best intention for the good of the whole, all attempts like the *Rabbinerversammlungen* in Germany, the Conference in Cleveland, the Conference of the French Chief Rabbis, have assisted only in widening the gulf and calling forth a clearer and still more explicit statement of the principles separating both parties. Your party is unwilling and declares itself religiously bound not to yield; and the Reform party declare their inability to betray their better conviction by consenting to a retrogressive movement. Union, therefore, though in a higher sense governing the Jewish community with omnipotent sway, in your sense has become a mere phantom. This disunion may be deplored, but its existence can not be denied. It is the legitimate offspring of the spirit of our age, and claims the full right to our "exequatur."

But, you say, regarding your second objection, "the Bible, tradition, our codices and our usages are against your spirit of the age, and hence I am forced to condemn all your principles of Reform." This is your *Malakoff,* and in this, your stronghold, you have so many byways and vicious circles that you continually elude any positive answer to a direct question of your opponents. If anyone proves to you the obsoleteness of many a ceremony, you reply: "Let that be; it will fall by itself; and let us unite on the imperative commands of the Bible and of tradition." If then another one tells you: "Well, then, let us do away with these obsolete ceremonies," you reply: "But they are the bequeathed and endeared customs of old, instituted by learned and pious men, and we have no right to abolish them" (though they may be antirabbinical and antitraditional). If then a third one comes and tells

you: "Sir, you are behind the times with your views and opinions," then you assert (*Occident*, Nov., p. 383): "We have urged the abolishing of auction sale in the synagogue, the discontinuance of *Misheberach,* the keeping of order and decorum in the synagogue; it is needless to furnish a catalogue of our reforms." And when, then, a fourth one comes, telling you: "No, sir, *here* your catalogue is at end; and these are no reforms. Time wants other reforms, and has already carried them out," then you reply (*Occident,* p. 386): "According to the plain reading of the rule of the *Orach Chajim* it is prohibited, and all sophistry can not wipe it out."

To this mode of reasoning we must make an end. We must try to disentangle this labyrinth of your confused ideas; show the contradiction in your own arguments, and with matters of fact, apply the dissecting knife of criticism to your *mixtum compositum,* in which, in the most perverted manner you use as ingredients Bible, tradition, rabbinical codices and usages and we will prove how much even you and your party have been influenced by "the spirit of the age," so that a full return to your proposition has become the most ridiculous impossibility. I therefore invite you to an investigation ascending from the usages upwards to the Bible.

1. USAGES. You declare them as holy and inviolable, and as the reason of your argument, you adduce the two sentences, generally quoted מנהג של ישראל תורה "the customs of Israel are laws," and מנהג עוקר הלכה "the custom abolishes the law;" hence it is proved that they can not be touched. But, sir, in the name of common sense, how could the true meaning of these two sentences be so entirely misconstrued?

Do not these sentences prove just the contrary of your assertions? They say in plain words that the respective consciousness of every era and age repeals the law, that the *Minhag* (the custom) is entitled to uproot (*Oker*) even a *fixed law and statute* (*Halacha*), and that the new custom of Israel becomes the law. Instead of being a conservative statement, it is entirely in favor of Reform; instead of supporting your assertion it refutes it entirely. The rabbis duly foresaw that the life of a nation destined to outlive all changes and chosen to accomplish the redemption of the whole human race, could not possibly be limited to customs fixed a thousand years past. With their usual perspicuity they laid down these broad principles as a groundwork for further development. By virtue of these two revolutionary sentences they sanctioned the customs of their ages, though founded neither on Bible nor on tradition, and the legal and powerful authority of these two sentences they bequeathed to following generations, to do for their times as they had done for the preceding ones. Maintaining this ground we feel fully satisfied to see custom changing in our times; we know what right we have to sanction and to approve of this change. But misconstruing these sentences, what reasons can you adduce for sanctioning changes wrought in our private as well as in our public life? None, none at all! And, nevertheless, you must confess the changes are correct; a retrogression has become an impossibility, and anyone who would urge it would make our religion a contemptible laughing stock.

I will give you a few examples, while I feel sorry to turn to ridicule. You know that the married women in Israel were forbidden to appear in public without

covering their hair; that hence they were used not only to wear hoods but even a kind of wig. The rabbinical law went so far as to make it a legal argument for a divorce if a married woman trespassed this law, and that she could be divorced without even obtaining her *Ketubah*. This custom nowadays has been done away with; the women removed the covering and everyone gave his silent consent to this change. Would you, dear sir, dare now to step before the American Jewish public and argue the necessity of reintroducing this custom, and in case of failing to carry your point, advocate, on such a ground, the legality of a divorce?

Or, you know of what paramount influence, even thirty years ago, was the prohibition of *Yayin Nesech* with all its numerous ramifications, or another prohibition of carrying an umbrella on a Sabbath, so that even under a very heavy shower no one dared to open it, or (but I rather stop, *exempla sunt odiosa*) would you dare on such a ground to censure the American Israelites for irreligious frivolity? Would you not run the risk of being laughed at when calling such customs "religion?" Must you not acknowledge, that the spirit of the age having wrought this change, has outgrown that consciousness of religious minuteness, and has conceived quite a higher and more sublime idea of religion?

You see, your theory has come into open contradiction with the practice and consciousness of the age; that a retrogression has become a moral impossibility; that this fence is actually broken down; and, nevertheless, with the ostrich policy you do not want to see it; you can not condemn it, and in accordance with your principle, you can not approve it. Will you

not please tell me, without any ambiguity, how you will extricate yourself from such a self-contradictory ridiculous position?

V.

RABBINICAL CODICES, OR THE SHULCHAN ARUCH.

Cincinnati, Dec. 26, 1856.

I am coming now to the rabbinical codices or the *Shulchan Aruch*. The supreme principle directing your opinion in this province you have clearly defined by the sentence (*Occident*, Nov., 386) *"The plain reading of the rule of the Shulchan Aruch prohibits it, and no sophistry can wipe it out."* By this autocratic and dictatorial assertion you have declared the inviolability of these codices. This, your opinion, is founded on the obsolete medieval notion of an immediate trust in any authority whatever. Without admitting any critical or historical investigation like the kings and nobles of *"Dei gratia,"* you refer to your old books and titles, exclaiming: "Here is the law, sanctioned by the reverence and obedience of bygone centuries; we have to adopt it as we have inherited it; we have no right either to abolish it or even to winnow and sift it. The *Shulchan Aruch* is my guide, and any contradiction of this premise is plain and open heresy."

The spirit of our age, however, unwilling to yield to ukases, replies: Let us examine this your autocratic prohibition. Is the *Shulchan Aruch*, as it is presented to us, a divine revelation, so that no sophistry can wipe it out? No, it is not. Is its entire context a complex of mere direct traditions (*Halacha leMoshe Misinai*)? No, it is not. Does the *Shulchan Aruch*

contain nothing but the plain *Halachoth* of the Talmud? No, it contains also the continuous additions and accretions made by a host of rabbis down to the latter centuries. Was it adopted *in toto* by all the Jews throughout all centuries? No, for the Portuguese Jews follow the opinion of Rabbi Joseph Karo only, while the German and Polish Jews adopted the additions of still later authorities. Hence even from your standpoint it would be permitted to strike out half of the *Shulchan Aruch,* by rescinding all but the plain reading of the rules of Joseph Karo. By this proceeding one full half of our onerous customs and usages would be done away with, they being founded on no other authority than on that of the Polish scholar Remah,[1] who imported into that codex the manners and customs of the Jews then living in Poland. This importation, having neither biblical nor traditional foundation, but merely the spontaneous consent of his and the following generations, can be declared void of any legal authority as soon as this consent of submitting any longer to these unfounded accretions is withdrawn. Hence without any sophistry whatever, but by virtue of good right and title, at least one-half of our *Shulchan Aruch* can be wiped out as soon as the people are willing to assume this legal authority.

But probing the question still deeper we must ask: What course have we to pursue, when we can prove that legal decisions, as compiled in the *Shulchan Aruch* in course of time have shaped themselves in open contradiction to the plain reading of the rule of the Bible and tradition, and of abolishing developments of later date, that nowadays have become onerous and conflicting with the demands of the time?

[1] Moses Isserles.

You will reply that there are no decisions of that kind. Well, then, I will give you but a very few examples, and matters of fact will substantiate my charge:

1. The scrupulous and minute form of our giving divorce. The plain word of the Bible reads thus: "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she finds no favor in his eyes, because he hath found some unseemly thing in her, then let him write her a bill of divorce and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house." (Deut. xxiv, 1.) The sense and meaning of this biblical command, of providing the dismissed wife with a written bill of divorce, is no other than that she might be furnished with a document entitling her to be married to another man.

In full accordance with the plain reading of the Bible the Talmud, therefore (*Treatise Gittin*) maintains, that after the charge for giving a divorce has been substantiated, the bill of divorce may be written by anyone whomsoever, in any language and form, provided that it expresses the sense of the divorce, be signed in a legal form by witnesses, etc.

Please compare with this plain legal proceeding the minuteness and the difficulties for writing a divorce detailed in our codex *Eben Haesar*. These go so far that by the most insignificant mistake by the *Sopher* (scribe) the entire bill is declared to be void of any legal validity. Would a reform of this proceeding be antibiblical and antitraditional? Would it be beyond our legal right if we would draw up a formula in plain Hebrew, and translate it into the vernacular of the country, without paying any attention to these obsolete directions?

2. The abolition of the second day of *Yom Tob*.

The Bible never and nowhere commands it. The Talmud tells us plainly that these traditional days were introduced merely because the days were not fixed by mathematical calculation, but by the monthly observations of the new moon; and as the messengers sent by the proper authorities for carrying the information as to what days had been appointed holidays could not reach the distant communities in proper time, these second days were instituted to prevent a desecration of the biblical holiday. The Talmud says clearly this is no legal obligation, but a mere custom dating from later times.

The mode of fixing the holidays having entirely changed nowadays, the calculation of the almanac being correct beyond any mistake, the second day of *Yom Tob* being burdensome to a great many of our merchants, tradesmen and mechanics, there being no legal objection raised either by the Bible or tradition, why should we not advocate and sanction a reform when so imperatively demanded, as was done only a few years ago by the Jewish merchants of Italy?

3. The reading of the entire Pentateuch in the synagogue every three years. The Bible ordains (Deut. xxxiii, 10-13) the reading of the law every seven years on the Feast of Tabernacles in the year of release. The Talmud (*Megillah,* fol. 39b) states plainly that in Palestine the Pentateuch was read every three years, for they did not care as we do for the mere reading, but that the portion might be understood by the congregation; and hence they appointed a *Meturgeman* who translated and explained every verse in the vernacular of the country to the attentive listeners.

What meaning has the hasty, unintelligible manner of our reading? Why should we not adopt and ad-

vocate a reform, entirely in accordance with the Bible and tradition and in harmony with the demands of our time? What reasonable objection can you raise to such an important and telling improvement of our service? Here, then, sir, you find three examples of decisions, entirely in contradiction with the plain reading of the rule of the Bible and tradition; what reasons or what laws will you adduce for censuring congregations that are willing to adopt such reforms, and to carry out such a radical change of our *Shulchan Aruch?*

You find yourself, then, in the following dilemma: From your standpoint you must assert, either that the legislative power has ceased with Bible and Talmud, or that the same has been bequeathed also to future generations. If it did cease with the first authorities, then certainly we are entitled to abolish the interpretations of later rabbis; and if it did not cease with them, and every successive generation be endowed with the same authority, then we too are entitled to do away with what they have added. Hence, whatever side of the question you advocate, you are logically bound to repeal your autocratic assertion, "the plain reading of the rule of the *Shulchan Aruch* prohibits it, and no sophistry can wipe it out."

I know all the objections you will raise even against this dilemma, and will examine them with the greatest impartiality.

First you will object: "How will you compare the rabbis of our age with those gigantic minds, the eminent Talmudists, the men of unbiased piety of bygone ages; your comparison is lame, and no one will grant you the same authority he willingly concedes to those paragons of learning and religion." Why not, dear

sir? Without pointing out the impropriety of imputing to the present rabbis either deficiency of knowledge or want of true piety, I shall refer you to one of your own acknowledged authorities, the Talmud itself, that provided beforehand against such a bar to all progress, against such unlimited reverence of bygone ages. In Treatise *Rosh Hashannah,* page 25b, we read: "It is said (Deuter. xvii, 9) thou shalt go to the priests and Levites and the judge, that will be in these days; now certainly a man can not go to a judge who was not in his days, but has to go to the judge appointed in his own time, so that thou mayest not say (Eccles. vii, 10) that the former days were better than our own." *Rashi* and *Tosephot* corroborate this attitude, and hence this, your objection, is waived by the authority you cite.

But you continue: "Were the rabbis of old at least not as sound and great scholars as those of our time? Why, then, did they arrive at conclusions so widely differing from those of the modern rabbis?" The reply, sir, is a plain and simple one. The cause of this difference is to be found in the difference of the spirit of the respective ages. They acknowledged and submitted blindly to any rabbinical decision whatever, while in our days every authority before being recognized is put to the test of a critical investigation. They started when giving their decisions from the supreme principle כל מהמיר תבוא עליו ברכה "the more severe the better," while our time starts from the opposite principle כחא דהיתירא עדיף ליה, "the alleviating and disburdening decision has the legal preference." Hence the difference of the times and the results.

But you continue saying: "People are not yet prepared for such a change; you confuse them with your

theories; you cause a religious revolution, pregnant with the most fatal results; better leave everything *in statu quo;* the doubts engendered by the result of progressive science have taken hold of many a mind, have undermined the faith in the legal foundation, and are urging imperatively the required change. By your masterly inactivity you will foster hypocrisy, the results of which—indifference and atheism—will be a thousand times worse than all reforms." No, sir, if the masses are not yet sufficiently prepared for the changes unavoidably in store for us, it is the holy duty of the Jewish ministry and press to enlighten them on every subject, to build a bridge from the existing order of things over to the newly discovered truth, to assist them in overcoming the travails of the present state of transition, instead of misconstruing an obligation to uphold what time has declared obsolete. As soon as right has been proved to be right, let it be openly declared in spite of the insinuations of the opponents. Such an unanimous and hearty cooperation of all professional men will soon remove the obstacles thought to be insurmountable, establish the right of reform on legal and rational grounds, and restore peace and harmony.

Summing up, then, I deem the reform of the *Shulchan Aruch* to be justified beyond any objection. Therefore, I pause for an answer, which, no doubt, will be given with that impartiality and absence of passion that is befitting a contest, the end and aim of which is the glorification of truth and not of our humble selves.

THE FLAG AND THE UNION.[1]

Welcome, thrice welcome, brethren, in the name of God, the invincible warrior—the Lord is his name! Welcome in the name of our good and great country, the harbinger of liberty, the messenger of people's right and people's might! Welcome in the name of our president, who ordered us to celebrate this day of thanksgiving, of national victory and national rejoicing! Welcome in the name of Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, and their hosts of heroes, who have won for us this day of glory and victory, this day of national pride and resurrection!

Indeed this is a great day! It is not a family festival over which happiness reigns in one house, while tears and mourning may darken the neighbor's residence. It is not a sectarian holiday, celebrated in one church while it is ridiculed or disregarded in the neighboring house of divine worship! No; a whole nation's heart thrills with great joy; the eyes of the whole nation are filled with tears of gratitude; nay, more, still more—not only we, the free people of America, are celebrating this day of glory and honor, but the nations all over the globe who are struggling for liberty and man's innate rights will in time to come join with us in celebrating with us the fourteenth day of April, the day on which the stars and stripes again were raised over the ruins of Fort Sumter—

[1] Address at the Broadway Synagogue, Cincinnati, April 15, 1865.

the stripes in unequaled grandeur, the stars in unwonted light and splendor.

Oh, how dearly we love thee, blessed flag of our country! How proudly we look upon thee, emblem of the home of the brave and the free! How reverently we embrace thee, sacred legacy of our immortal Washington! Is it true that thine own children have forsaken thee, have rebelled against thee, have trampled thee in the dust, nay, afar down in the Sunny South, have buried thee at the foot of a monument of the immortal Jackson, in a dark and silent grave, as if thou, heaven-born child, wert not eternal like the heavens, as if after the Creator's command, "Let there be light," the heavenly stars could be extinguished, and give way to the darkness of chaos and disorder?

Alas! It is so. This day, four years ago, was the gloomiest in the history of our country; it was as if the sun of liberty were setting forever! Monarchs were rejoicing, but the nations were desponding; kings and their myrmidons were shouting, "The people's government is a vision and delusion," but nations were despairing—the last hope of the regeneration of the human race seemed to be lost forever.

Oh, we remember those days of agony and national misery! Morning after morning brought us the heartrending news, sister state after sister state was seceding; the holy bond of our union was broken. Who dared at that time to look up at this flag, with its then thirty-one stars, without feeling ashamed of the mockery it represented, without being shocked at the insult it offered to the blazing escutcheon? Who dared to think of the Monument of Bunker Hill, once the lighthouse of liberty to the downtrodden

immigrant, now the warning finger of the people's incapacity for self-government! Who dared to pass the glorious Independence Hall of Philadelphia without hearing the reproach of the spirits hovering in those sacred abodes lamenting: "We have risked blood and treasure for your flag and ye have doomed it to scorn, mockery and perdition?" Who dared to journey down the Potomac to Mt. Vernon, to the sacred grave of the Father of his Country without fearing to desecrate by his presence the solemn abode, and to disturb by the afflicting news of the day the blessed slumber of our immortal Washington? Who dared to visit our national capital, visit the Senate and House of Representatives, without being reminded of Jeremiah's lamentations: "How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people. She that was great among the nations and princes, among the provinces she has become a widow?" And when we were viewing the splendid river watering the hills of doubtful and wavering Kentucky, how broke our hearts when silently meditating: "There are the frontiers between North and South; forever we must look at our disgrace, forever we shall have our national shame before our eyes!" O what wonder that good patriots committed suicide, exclaiming: "Better death than a disgraced country!"

But over the dishonored flag stood in all its power and fury, watchful, ever ready, the eagle of America. How he screamed in tribulation! How he beat his majestic wings! How he awakened his people to the great words of our Jackson: "The Union must and shall be preserved!" It was a mere word, now let it become a bloody reality! It has in peaceful times long enough decorated your homes, embellished your houses,

been greeted with deafening applause when referred to by your speakers. "Prove it, my people, that it was not a mere sound, not mere self-flattery, not mere deception, but earnest, real, good earnest. Up to the rescue, my children. Up to heaven I will soar, and there I will fasten the stars that they shall float higher than ever, the emblem of our Union, the sign of human liberty."

And the children came, as only Americans come—not as Frenchmen, roused with momentary enthusiasm for sham liberty and vainglory, nor like Englishmen for egotistical pride and commercial interests, nor like Germans dreaming of visionary liberty yet sulking under the yoke of reaction—but determined and resolved to maintain the integrity of their country, the honor of the star-spangled banner and to fight for all the world the decisive battle of universal freedom. The old sire grasped the hand of his son: "Gird thy sword, and though thou art my only support—first the country and then our family!" The mother embraced the young warrior, priding herself on his military bearing: "Go, go, my son. Mother's love and mother's blessing accompany you!" Sisters were embracing brothers; sweethearts once more were embracing their lovers: "Off, off, young heroes! This lock of hair, this scarf of national colors —take it as your talisman, and bring us back the banner untarnished and unstained!"

And they went, resolved to wash off the inflicted stains with the best lifeblood of the nation. The surging waves of the ocean of rebellion were driven back, and "Onward, onward!" was the cry of these legions of citizen soldiers. Long was the struggle, terrible the sacrifices, numerous the disappointments;

but "Onward, always onward!" was the warcry of the army, the prayer of the nation. Art and nature combined were no obstacles for republican valor and bravery—the night began to disperse, the clouds to disappear, victory to smile, confidence to grow—and there after four long years dawns the fourteenth of April again, and on Fort Sumter waves the old flag, with inscriptions of Austerlitzes, of Marengos, of Sebastopols and Solferinos—but of no Moscows and no Waterloos. No, every star is an emblem of a new victory, and from Fort Donelson up to Richmond are marked the steps of the giant heroes; and over the deluge of blood is triumphantly waving the ark of the Union, greeted already by the sweet dove harbinger who is bringing the olive branch of peace, union and universal liberty.

All hail, then, our glorious republic, undivided and undivisible! We sing today with the royal psalmist: "They that sow in tears will reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing with him his sheaves." Yes, we have sown in tears, for in this hour of joy and triumph we do not forget the honored graves of the thousands and tens of thousands who sleep in the churchyards of the South, where even now nature is bringing the gifts of the spring as offering. Yes, we have sown in tears, for there is mourning by every heartstone; there are broken hearts at every fireside; there are widows who have offered their best; there are orphans who have lost their fathers —and killed, not by foreign foes, not by foreign invaders, but by the fatricidal hand of erring brethren.

Yes, we have sown in tears, for there is poverty where good fathers provided ample support for their

beloved families; there is mourning where there was joy and happiness; there is gloom and hopelessness where life was full of the buds of future prosperity. No, we shall not forget these graves; with eternal gratitude we lay the laurel leaf on every tomb; with feelings of everlasting indebtedness we adorn the sepulchers of our fallen heroes; we weep with the orphan; we mourn with the widow; we grieve with the bereft ones—but he who sows with tears shall reap with joy bringing with him his sheaves.

Yes, brethren, it is a rich harvest we are bringing home. These are precious fruits we are gathering from these battlefields, which required rivers of blood for their nurture. These are innumerable blessings for which we are celebrating this thanksgiving. We have in four years advanced intellectually, morally and politically more than other nations will in centuries to come.

Four years ago, how many of us were Abolitionists? How many of us dreamt of the possibility that this sacred soil of liberty should be cleansed from the scourge of slavery? How many of us had moral courage enough to think that this great stain could be or should be removed from the brilliant escutcheon of the American people? We hated the Radicals; we shunned their society; we abhored the though of abolition—all that we aimed at, all that we were striving for, was the confinement of slavery to its then territorial limits. Not one, not even our president dreamed of interfering with the specific institutions of the South. We acknowledged their rights as slaveholders. We would even have been willing to defend their slave property. And now,

hard and dire necessity has taught us the lesson of supreme morality. Right must be right whatever may be the consequences. Dire necessity pressed into the hands of Lincoln the pen for signing the decree of emancipation; and dire necessity made every citizen a strong advocate of the same doctrine.

It is no wanton lust to let the conquered foe feel the might of the conquering sword; it is no thirst for revenge that bids us let the vanquished drink to the dregs the bitter cup of punishment; no, to us was left the choice: Union or the Abolition of Slavery. It hovered in our midst like a midnight specter deranging our relations as members of our country, dividing the land into two sections as widely differing as the north and south poles, interfering with legislative promptitude and harmony. We let it grow till it brought us to the verge of national ruin, and having been saved, the instinct of self-preservation prompts us to eradicate the evil. Now that we have accomplished that we shall have a Union indeed. We shall have peace; we shall be one people no longer divided into two sections.

With millions of lives and millions of treasure, we have brought a sacrifice for our national existence, and morally atoned and morally redeemed we are standing before the astonished and amazed world. Oh, what progress, what blessing, what harvest in four years! Four years ago the president-elect, the scorned rail-splitter, on his way to Washington, had to disguise himself as a Scotchman in order to elude the assassin's dagger that awaited him in "Maryland, my Maryland." Inaugurated into his office, the oath was administered to him by the chief justice of the United States, the author of the Dred Scott decision.

And four weeks ago, the same man elected to the same office in spite of having signed the Declaration of Emancipation, now respected and revered, now considered as a man of manifest destiny and heroic immortality, renders the oath to the hands of another chief justice, the advocate of universal human freedom, and on the border of "Maryland, my Maryland"—a free state, freed from the everlasting blemish of slavery.

Again, the war found us a conglomeration of semi-independent states; it leaves us a nation. The vision of state sovereignty has vanished; the right of secession is discarded; the idea of state supremacy over the might of the Union is exploded. We feel now that we have a country that reaches from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the North to the Gulf, one and indivisible. We feel now that we have a government, strong, mighty and powerful enough to maintain our integrity and to crush under the wheels of its majestic chariot any attempt at dismemberment, and know now that the Union is not a mere sound; not a mere theory, but a stern reality which the people will never surrender and for which the people are ready to sacrifice the last drop of blood and the last particle of treasure. Thank God, we, our children, and our children's children have a home again—a country again. We in the North never spoke of, never advocated state sovereignty; it was the unenvied privilege of South Carolina and Calhoun. We, when traveling in Europe and asked from what country we came, always answered with true conscious pride: "We are American citizens." Our Southern brethren, too, henceforth will not say: "We are from the South, or from Georgia;" sharing the

glory of the North, they, too, will learn to answer, "We are American citizens"—every one of us proud of his country, every one of us considering himself a member of the whole Union, everyone willingly and joyously doing homage to the country one and indivisible forever. And there shall no more be two nations, no more be divided into two kingdoms.

Again we are thanking our Lord and singing hymns and praises of glory. We are standing here in the blaze of victory; we exult over the success of our armies and navy; inspired with gratitude we teach our children the names of the heroes who have won the day and saved the country; but where is the feeling for retaliation, the thirst for vengeance, the lust for subjugation? Oh! Such a victory has not yet been celebrated in history. We have bled for the enemy; we have fought for his interest; we have struggled to save him from the ambition of unscrupulous leaders; we have suffered only with the aim and purpose that he shall share with us the same blessings and the same duties we are willing to bequeath to our children. We will levy no compensation to defray the expenses of the war; we will claim no extra privileges for being the conquerors. "Lay down your arms," says our immortal Grant, "and you will hasten the most desirable event of peace." "Lay down your arms," says our glorious Sherman, "revoke your secession ordinance, elect your legislature and your members of congress, and live with us, united and happy under the same constitution." Oh, is this not a victory, as only a free people will achieve it?

The Sunny South will ere long discover that we were her real sympathizers; that we alone meant it

well with her; that we redeemed her from bondage, and by introducing free labor into the Southern States we will make them the Paradise of the World, the storehouse of all nations, the treasury of immense wealth. A victory without a sting of remorse, without a sting of reproach to the repentant foe, repaying the aggressor with twofold blessing, and covering his hideous crime with true and sincere love—such a victory can only be achieved in our country, by our people, in the abode of freedom and equality.

Again, how did the war find us? A great, but a peaceable nation. How does it leave us? One of the grandest military powers of the globe; one of the great powers and umpires of nations. We thought we had a government only for peaceable purposes—the people hardly knew we had a government; it was considered the instrument for measuring out the spoils, the loaves and fishes to the hungry and greedy politicians. Hence the lack of confidence in the beginning; hence the desire for compromise to avoid the impending war; hence the desire not to be disturbed in our peaceable pursuits.

The South knew it and calculated on our despondency. "The Yankee can not fight the Southern chivalry," was their broad, self-deceiving assertion; and the European powers arranged the program so as to procure the most favorable terms from the new Southern Empire. How both were deceived! Our coast is now begirt with fortresses; our capital is fortified; our navy is the most formidable; our army is powerful enough to sweep resistlessly from end to end of the continent. It found us ignorant of war; it leaves us the first in military power, for armies led by a man like Grant, commanded by men

like Sherman and Sheridan, Thomas and Schofield will meet any foe and prove that they are invincible. Oh, how the English Parliament flatters, praises, admires, but still more fears us! How the abettors of the Confederacy tremble while they hear the joyful tidings of Grant's incomparable campaign! They know the fate of history is decided; the further development of mankind will be directed by the ideas vindicated in our gigantic struggle; they know the Chief Justice of God's nations henceforth will be the great Republic of our United States! Oh, how our hearts are swelling with national pride! How devoutly we lift hand and heart to divine Providence, who through the Red Sea of civil warfare is leading us to the land of promise and blessing!

Brethren, another cause for thanksgiving is that we have gained a victory for the people, who are struggling for liberty and self-government. Oh, we have fought and won not only our battles, but theirs also! We have conquered not only for the Union, but for the future Union of the whole race. No longer can princes assert that the people are unfit for self-government, that they are unable to cope with difficulties, that the first shock will ruin their institutions, that the first outbreak will pervert liberty into bloodshed and anarchy (because the French Revolution with the wholesale massacres of Robespierre and Marat have proved it, and America is only a trial, and has not yet stood the test of adversity, hence it needs a concentrated power at the helm of the ship of state, a divine right and might to guide it safely through the billows of raging storms!)—we have dispelled these errors and demonstrated to a civilized world that liberty is obedience to law, that from the

people emanates all power, and that a free educated people is fit for self-government. We assert the broad principle that liberty is obedience to law. Not fit for self-government? We have passed through an ordeal such as no other nation on this earth could have done, and our banner shines brighter now than the flag of any other country. We have given to the nations the arguments by which they will hereafter plead their cause, and henceforth liberty and popular self-government will be a self-evident truth and nothing will impede its onward march to victory.

Oh, yes, we have fought and conquered for the nations all over the world, for by our victories we have reinstated labor in all its pristine and becoming dignity. The French Revolution made one step towards the emancipation of the human race; it caused the overthrow of kings and scattered old parchments; it broke down the privileged classes, and raised the middle classes to a higher and more prominent station. But the laboring class still suffered; free labor was not redeemed till the North took up the gauntlet. Forced labor is now gone forever; free labor is redeemed; and for its redemption a whole nation has shed its best blood.

Oh, the working classes of England appreciated our struggle, and though suffering starvation did not sympathize with King Cotton. They applauded us; they encouraged us; they admired us; and their prayers, their hopes and their wishes forever were with our flag. And now having accomplished this gigantic work, now that our efforts are crowned with such success, and that we were the chosen instruments for accomplishing such beneficial results for the whole

human race, have we not sufficient reason for thanksgiving?

Glory to God in the highest! Who that has an American heart and American blood in his veins, who that has come from other lands, who hopes for the freedom of the human race, who that would bring light and happiness to the nations would not rejoice, would not join us in thanksgiving? Praise ye the Lord in the firmanent of his power! Praise him for his mighty acts! Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Hallelujah!

But, brethern, in conclusion we shall resolve as a token of our gratitude and our thankfulness for all these blessings bestowed upon us: "In the future our country above any and all parties." The cause of our dissension in the North was the unhappy principle that governed many men—"Party above all!" In times of peace opposition and party strife are not without beneficial influence. Opposition is the enlivening and correcting spirit of politics, but in times such as we are passing through, no party interest, no party principle, nothing but the country and the flag. "Right or wrong—my country!" said President Taylor, and every loyal citizen must endorse the sentiment, though the civil laws must be suspended for a time; though the wonted liberty be restrained temporarily, every sacrifice should be made for the country! May the Lord forgive those who slandered our good president for enforcing rules which the desperate state of the times required; who wished traitors and their abettors to go unmolested; who would not comprehend the terrible necessity that demanded exceptionable laws and legislatures. No complaint should have been made against the extreme

measure adopted by our president, solely for the country's salvation. We had rather complain of the goodness and mercy of his heart than the severity of his administration.

Yes, the King of Prussia was right when he said, "The government of the United States is the most merciful and the most lenient of all governments," and truly we have the best government in all the world. In what other country would a man have been tolerated before the United States court, to assert his allegiance only to his native state, but not to the United States? He would have been sent either as a traitor and rebel to a dungeon or as a lunatic to an asylum. Our country in the assurance of the love of its citizens, in the consciousness of majesty, passes the offender by in silence. In the darkest times of the Union there never was danger of the restraint of personal liberty; how much less in the days of victory and triumph! Oh! there is but one country, one America; there is but one self-government. Let us swear allegiance to it. Let our motto be forever: "Our country above and before any and all parties!"

First our country and then our interest. There are men speculating on the defeat of our armies; there is a gold hole in the eastern metropolis that thwarted the credit of our country; there are men mourning over commercial losses resulting from the victories of our brave soldiers. Do not be numbered among them; do not belong to them, but let your motto be: "First our country, and then our business!" More sacrifices will yet be exacted from us; more liberality will yet be required. Let it be acceded to cheerfully and willingly.

Diffuse knowledge throughout the entire breadth of the land in order to prevent a bloody repetition of the drama that has been enacted on the sacred soil of our country. Ignorance is the willing tool of tyranny; knowledge is power and the parent of liberty. Look at the past years: Every state adorned with free schools, nursing and fostering education, stood loyal to the country and the constitution; every state devoid of free education and popular instruction joined secession and rebellion. The ignorant masses followed inconsiderately the criminal leaders, while the enlightened North stood faithfully and manfully by its duties.

Education fosters loyalty; ignorance promotes every crime. In the beginning of the war our arsenals were empty; our country was defenseless, but our schools were filled and crowded and the spirit of enlightenment prevailed.

Let there be no hatred, no vengeance against the South. Let the leaders feel the majesty of the law; but to repentant rebels give pardon, mercy and brotherly love. They have sowed the wind and reaped the whirlwind. Fierce retribution like burning lava rolls over the South; it has found anguish and suffering in the dregs of that cup which it prepared for the nation four years ago: let this anguish and desolation be the sacrifice of atonement.

Let us now show that we can be as magnanimous in peace as terrible in war; that we will so temper justice with mercy as to take the sting from defeat; that we can conquer without subjugation; that we are willing to invest with equal dignity as citizens and countrymen those who by their valor and endurance,

though in a bad cause, have established their equality of manhood.

Across the fresh graves of our brethren let us clasp hands with every repentant rebel who returns; let our thanksgiving prayer rise to divine mercy on the wings of pardon and forgiveness to our erring brother.

But if charity is required toward him, how much more to our unfortunate brethren, and here I mean to call your attention to the families of the soldiers, to the widows and orphans of the fallen heroes. It is true, we have done much all over the Union for their relief and their assistance; the records of our sanitary fairs, of our soldier testimonials and of our Relief Unions prove to mankind that America is the most charitable country in the world. Every single city of any commercial importance has done more than whole nations on the other side of the continent under like circumstances.

Oh, let us then in our joy not forget those who reaped for us this victory; we owe them a debt, larger, much larger than our national one. Let this liability be met with a spirit full of gratitude and reverence. If a soldier's widow stretches her hand or begs for work, give it to her; if a soldier's orphan accost you, help and assist him—his father has fought for you, for us; if a man on crutches, a cripple with one arm passes by you, notice him, give him, relieve him before all others—he can not live from the scanty pension allowed him by the government. Then will we celebrate this day in a becoming spirit; then will we truly honor the flag of the brave; then amidst our own rejoicing will we gladden the hearts of the South; a smile will return to their lips, hope

will be rekindled in their fainting breasts—they, too, will join the chorus of the nation.

In conclusion, brethren, we give thanks today because the sun of liberty has risen again in all its pristine transplendent beauty, its rays undimmed, its light untarnished, and now sheds its glorious warmth over a nation which will soon, as in days of yore, know no North, no South, no East, no West; we give thanks for the manifest blessings with which the Lord of Hosts has seen fit to crown our arms; we give thanks because our glorious banner of freedom will soon again wave from the forests of Maine to the sunny shores of the Gulf, from the golden sands of California to the rock-bound coasts of Florida, over an undivided people.

"Great God! we thank thee for the home,
This bounteous birthland of the free!
Where wanderers from afar may come
And breathe the air of liberty.
Still may her flowers untrampled spring!
Her harvests wave; her cities rise!
And yet till Time shall fold his wing,
Remain earth's loveliest Paradise."

THE ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN.[1]

Brethren, is this the same flag which a grateful and victorious people but a few days ago was greeting with the intensest national pride and national joy? Why droop today its brilliant stars, its mighty stripes? Why is it draped in mourning? And this bust, crowned but a few days ago with the laurel wreath of fresh and decisive victories, why does it look so pale? Why, too, is it craped and hidden? Why are we frightened today as we look upon its mild and good features?

Alas, this is a gloomy day! From the dawn of American history up to this mournful hour such an assemblage has never convened. We have buried our Washington and our Jefferson, our Franklin and our Jackson, but such a meeting has never been witnessed. These patriots were full of years and full of honors; their task had been finished, and, resigned to the stern laws of nature, a grateful people accompanied them quietly to their resting place. But today the feelings of the nation are aroused as never before; a new crime has made its way into the land of our Republic and "Murder! Murder!" is the agonizing cry that echoes from the Atlantic to the shores of the Pacific.

Oh, on the fatal Saturday morning that brought

[1] Address delivered at the Broadway Synagogue, April 22, 1865.

us such gloomy tidings, when we were prepared to read only of the festivities of the nation, and to enjoy once more the jubilee of the preceding day! We hurried to the telegraphic despatches—what letters are these? What do they mean? We were unwilling to trust our senses. We could not realize at first the stern truth. But when we recovered from our first shock, when we became convinced of the terrible reality, then the heart of the nation stood still—breathless, lifeless, paralyzed! And when the tears began to relieve our stupefaction, the lips quivered with the heart-rending exclamation: "Oh, God! our good president has been assassinated!"

That was a terrible morning, indeed! People were running to and fro, restless, comfortless, pursued in all streets by the same bewildered uneasiness, void of speech, void of thought—for we had not yet learned to read and to understand a page of American history written by the dagger of an assassin.

Indeed, a great man has fallen in Israel! There never sat in the presidential chair of this country a man who, by his life, as well as by his death, so fully demonstrated the progress of modern ideas and the greatness and glory of our institutions. Disregarding the sterling virtues of the individual man, it seems as if it had been his manifest destiny to impress upon the people the invaluable privilege of our laws and our institutions. The nation feels this, and hence at the shrine of the assassinated body offers prayers and thanks for having witnessed the example of such a man's life; thinks herself especially indebted to him and to his memory, and mourns his loss so much the more deeply.

Who was Abraham Lincoln? The first laborer-

president! Of his antecedents nothing can be said except that he had risen by his own energies from the obscurest sphere of life. He had battled with all manner of personal difficulties and had overcome them; he had struggled against all obstacles and had conquered them; and by his sagacity, energy and unsophisticated honesty succeeded in being elected to the highest office within the gift of the people. And thus his election proved for the first time the full meaning of American liberty and equality.

The people, the laboring classes all over the world, were now emancipated indeed; their rights were not a mere dead letter—they were now sealed and signed by the majestic hand of history. In Abraham Lincoln the workingmen were raised to the full acquisition of the infinite rights of man. "Despair not," says his example, "because you are born in an obscure station; be not disheartened because you must wrestle with the disadvantages of the want of education—life is the best school; energy and perseverance the best teacher; honesty of purpose the best means for obtaining success." Follow his example and we shall finally and in fact establish the equality of mankind. He has achieved this triumph, and a whole world stands there first amazed, and then admiring the man who, by his own indomitable energy, proves the greatness and glory of our institutions.

But not this fact alone endears him to the American heart and to liberty-loving people all over the world! He laid still firmer hold on our affections by being the truest representative of our boundless and invincible love for the Union and our flag. There lives no man in this country in whom the people had more implicit confidence that he would not surrender

the Union, cost what it may. "The Union must and shall be saved!" was the unwavering motto of his administration; "Union first!" In the north he tried all means to reconcile the party spirit. He called to his aid every man of the Democratic party in whose loyalty he could place his trust; Stanton and Grant and Sherman and a host of other Democrats were called to the most important offices of the government. "Let the party spirit be silent," was his request, "till the Union is saved; for Heaven's sake, put the country above the party! And toward the South? Lay down your arms, reconstruct the Union, and I am ready to receive you with open arms," was his prayer—the words of his proclamation amnesty.

He was the true interpreter of our feelings toward the South. We did love her in spite of all her crimes, and he did love her too. We wanted to extend pardon to every repentant rebel, and he was ready to grant it in the fullness of his executive power. We were willing to forget the hecatombs of blood and treasure, provided the old flag were acknowledged again throughout the insurgent states; he, too, though weeping with the widow and mourning with the orphan, was willing to cover treason and rebellion with the mantle of love and clemency. But for the Union he stood, immovable as the North star, and hence the confidence of the people in his integrity, in his constancy. He was reelected for the second term, not by politicians, not by the wirepulling of hungry office-seekers, but by the stern voice of the people, who knew that in his hands their wishes for the South and the safety of the Union were best cared for. His sincerity, the simplicity of his heart, and the homely shrewdness of his mind were to the

people the best guarantees against the intrigues of diplomacy, or the connivances of party passions. And the Union was saved under his administration—established upon a platform broader and firmer than under either Washington or Jackson. Not a Union half free and half slave; not a Union of semi-independent sovereignties; not a Union of Mason and Dixon's line; not a Union floating on the border ruffianism of a Missouri Compromise; but a Union one and indivisible, free from north to south, and east to west—a supreme power superior to all state sovereignties. The dangers which Washington predicted, past; the threats which Jackson uttered, fulfilled; and over a redeemed and new-born country floated the star-spangled banner, stained with the fresh blood of its heroes, but with the stripes in all their grandeur and with the thirty-six stars in all their splendor. What wonder we began to look on him as the incarnation of our Union! We revered him; we loved him; we regarded him as a man of superior destiny, and entrusted willingly and thankfully to him the helm of our ship.

But what his life could not accomplish to make him the full representative of our institutions and the true interpreter of the character of our people fell to the lot of his death. If he had lingered on his sick-bed and died a natural death, the calamity then, too, would have been a national one, but it would not have taught us a new and important lesson. In the midst of civil warfare, in the midst of still living party passions, to fall by the dagger of an assassin, suddenly, unexpectedly and with no revolution, no anarchy, no outbreak, but everywhere respect for the law, willing submission to the constituted authority,

the machinery of government neither interrupted nor out of order—that lesson fills us with new reverence for our almost superhuman institutions and makes the republic still more precious in our estimation than ever before. And this lesson we have learned by the death of our lamented president; his blood was the great seal that was affixed to republican government and republican institutions. Who henceforth will contest the vitality, the possibility, the efficiency of free institutions? Who hereafter will deny that the history of this nation outshines all other nations in respect for law and order?

The hand of death hallows every human corpse, enshrines every deathbed with a sanctifying halo; but how much more the coffin of our illustrious martyr! We stand with feelings of awe and reverence at the side of such a martyr and such a sacrifice. But the sight is too overwhelming; the meaning of such a life and death overawes our innermost soul. We turn away and our heart longs for the object to whom our love and our affection were devoted. We gaze no longer at the hero and patriot—we look at the man and the friend. And what a change—this man who was without pride and ostentation, who had a smile for everyone and everything, a welcoming grasp and winning word—is this the man who was identified with the nation's terrible struggle and its deliverence? Yes, this man was Lincoln; behind this homely appearance once beat a heart full of faith, love and charity; within this heart once throned an integrity that escaped suspicion in the most corrupt time. All the foul slanders of his enemies and his opponents could excite in him neither anger nor hatred; his good humor assisted him in overcoming the

onerous duties of his office and the malice of his assistants; he often enlivened conversation by an apt anecdote; he indulged in sallies of wit, but they left no sting behind. His heart was as good as his conscience was just and clear. He could do no harm; he could not mistrust; he could not punish; he could only love and forgive; he was bent only on grace and reconciliation. Stern to himself, he was lenient toward others; faithful to his trust and his duties, he could not mistrust others; knowing the obstacles he himself had to overcome, he had an excuse for the tardiness and the shortcomings of others. When everyone pointed to faults and mistakes, he was still hopeful and waited for improvement; when everyone desponded and despaired, he still had faith in the sacred cause of his mission; and then, only then, when the success of his sacred charge was at stake, did he strike the blow which others would have dealt long before.

What wonder that such amiableness won him the love and respect of all those who knew him—who had spoken to him! What wonder that this faithfulness to his charge at last won him the respect even of the rebel press in Richmond! What wonder that this combination of unselfish patriotism with such kindness of heart and shrewdness of mind obtained for him the admiration of Europe! His last inaugural address raised him to the pinnacle of fame; he was on the point of being compared, by the impartial press of England, with Washington, Hampden and Cromwell. The nation began to feel proud of him; the country began to be assured of a happy termination of this terrible struggle with a harvest full of peace and the blessings of reconciliation; the

nations were looking for a new birthday of human liberty, inaugurated by the labor-president; and his words became as full of influence as any of the sovereigns of the great powers.

And these hopes were blighted by foul premeditated assassination! These anticipations were frustrated by the dagger of a murderer! Brethren, the first wild excitement that so justly aroused all has passed away, and now we do not know which shall we condemn the more—the atrocity of the crime or the folly and madness of the murderer? Whom—what did he slaughter? Was Lincoln a Julius Caesar, whose ambition, military genius, and indomitable energy represented and supported a new order of things? Was Lincoln a man like Louis XIV, who declared, "I am the State?" Lincoln was no Caesar, no Henry IV, no William of Orange, no Louis XIV. He was neither the military genius of this war, that by his death our armies were deprived of their leader; nor was he a pioneer standing alone and aloof in his age; nor did he represent a concentrated power like Louis XIV—he was nothing but the exponent of the sovereign will of the people; nothing but the elected executive of the people's government; nothing but the representative of the idea of universal freedom as enunciated in 1860 and endorsed by an overwhelming majority of the people in 1864. You may kill a man, but you can not kill a nation. You may kill the temporary executive, but you can not assassinate the government. In the hour of defeat and surrender, in the hour of hopeless prostration at the feet of your conqueror, you murder him who alone was able to save you; who invested by the people with the sovereign power of pardon and

clemency was willing to forgive and to pardon you; who seeing still in the rebel foe only a prodigal son of the Union was willing to receive you back with loving arms. Madman, stop! You strike your best, your truest friend! In vain the victim falls and reels in his blood!

"God help the South," exclaimed a rebel major in Washington when he heard the stunning tidings. "That is the severest blow the South has yet received," cried out Colonel Ould. The hour of mercy is past; the day of bloody retaliation is dawning. O God, why dost thou allow our brethren in the South to be so terribly misled by their leaders? Why must they empty the cup of sin and crime to its last dregs? Was the rebellion not enough that brought mourning to every hearthstone and misery to every fireside; that robbed the cradle and grave and swept with ruin and desolation throughout the land—why yet that villainous crime of assassination? There she stands now disgraced before the world—the Cain's mark on the dejected brow. All sympathy is lost for her, all pity with the vanquished is gone for her; the assassin is shunned, given up to law's bloody vengeance. The nations despise her, the princes will hate her for giving such an example; her negroes will exult for having obtained license for murder and assassination. May the Lord have mercy on your poor souls!

But no, brethren, we are assembled to do homage to his memory; we have come to do honor to his great and good name. Let us not desecrate this solemn hour by thoughts of vengeance and outbursts of indignation, becoming to the first moment of wild and inconsiderate excitement, but not befitting the

calm and magnanimous character of a free and victorious nation. Do you wish to honor his memory indeed? Do you intend to hand down to posterity his name in all its grandeur and glory, unstained by passion and untarnished by violence? Consider the legacy he has left you, execute it in the sense he was willing to finish his great work. To finish the work he has begun; to do it with that spirit of justice and firmness he has taught and shown us; to perform our duties with that sincere aspiration for universal happiness, without any desire to satisfy a momentary passion or impulse, however justifiable it may be—this is the only way in which we can honor the departed and celebrate this hour in a manner becoming the great man who is gathered to his predecessors.

Be men, before, and above all—cool, calm and dispassionate. He has set us the example, and by following his teachings we will honor his memory. His disposition was not turned to passion by the bloodiness of his time. Obliged to make his way privately through a slave state to escape a plot to assassinate him on his way to the capitol to assume his office; ridiculed for his precautions by those who desired his death; made the object of abuse so foul and malignant that it would have aroused implacable animosity in any man of ordinary human feelings, he retained his moderation of temper, his self-command, sound judgment, rectitude of intention and kind disposition. He closed his life with an act of unexampled magnanimity and clemency by dismissing the armed leaders of the rebellion to their homes, that they might return to peace and equal rights in the country they had deluged with blood. Let us profit by his almost divine example. The arm of the law

is strong; the eye of justice is sharp and watchful; the constituted authorities will do their duties fully and solemnly to bring the criminals and their abettors to light, and to the bar of punishment. Let us not take justice into our hands. No mob and no anarchy!

I know that the suspicion of a widespread conspiracy is aroused in many a mind. We think ourselves justified in tracing the root of the atrocious crime to other men than those who committed the bloody deed. This may be; but leave it to the proper hands—they will find the guilty ones. We have stood the trial of rebellion and we have broken it; we stood the horrors of the battlefields and their agonies, and we have conquered; let us stand the trial of this gloomy hour, too, and all danger will soon have vanished.

The world, which we have taught that a free people is able to support and defend its government, must also learn that a free people considers liberty to be respect for the law under any, even the most stirring circumstances, and that anarchy has nothing in common with the spirit of true freedom. Hence be cool, calm and dispassionate.

This remark does not imply, of course, that the sword of justice shall be sheathed, that treason shall reserve an homage of mercy, that arson and murder and pillage shall go on unpunished and that all will be forgotten if only the union be restored. No, brethren, it means only: justice, but no vengeance! It was the only fault of our lamented president, and he had to pay for it with his precious life, that he believed he could reconcile the bitter enemies of this country by pardon and mercy and win them over to

the sacred cause of our united republic. To allow a man like Booth—a man who, on the stage of New Orleans, trampled upon our flag—trampled on it and disgraced it—to allow such a man to go free and unmolested in our capital was a fatal error, a disastrous mistake, and the whole country has to suffer and to mourn for it. No! the days of leniency with rebel leaders are gone; the days of indulgence with open conspirators and their aiders and abettors are past—crime must be punished; the majesty of the law must be vindicated. We owe that to our self-preservation; we are prompted to do it from motives of mere self-defense.

Secessionists in our midst must be silenced; rebel sympathizers must be hushed. Let them beware to arouse the fury of the insulted and afflicted nation! Yes, justice must be met. Whosoever sheds man's blood, his blood must be shed; but brethren, let this be done by the proper authorities; let it be done with the stern calmness and majesty of the law—justice and no vengeance. Vengeance strikes the guilty and the innocent. Vengeance would tarnish our victory, disgrace our history, and miss the aim of our endeavors to reconstruct the country. There are thousands in the South who abhor the crime committed in our midst; there are thousands waiting eagerly for an opportunity of renewing their allegiance to our constitution; shall we estrange them from our cause by unmerited punishment? Shall we drive them to despair and a second rebellion by coupling the repentant sinner with the guilty criminal and leader? No, brethren. "Justice and no vengeance" must henceforth be our motto. "Justice and no vengeance" must be the sacred vow of this day by which we honor

the memory of the departed, and assist in carrying out the work to which his virtuous and noble life was devoted.

Thirdly, in this solemn and mournful hour, by the grave of the assassinated president, let us renew our own promise that neither life nor treasure shall be spared until the Union shall be restored in all its majesty and integrity. If the murder was not the mere result of passionate madness; if it was not the mere offspring of personal hatred and inconsiderate vengeance; if in the council of those who projected it, planned it, and may be, prayed for it, this foul crime had some meaning: it was the intent to paralyze the strong arm of the nation and to wrest from us in the final hour of victory the palm of success and glory. Let us prove to them that as futile as were their calculations about the weakness and the division of sentiment in the North at the outbreak of this wicked rebellion, so false and absurd were their estimates at the planning and the execution of this murder. Let us show them that the strength of the republic lies in the integrity of the people, which no assassin can destroy. Let them understand that it was even strengthened by the dastardly act which took the life of Abraham Lincoln. Let them learn that this calamity binds us closer to our country; that to a considerable extent it has already healed divisions; and that in this hour this flag, redeemed from rebellion and treason, appears to us more precious than ever. Let us rally round our banner and do our duty manfully and thoroughly. Let us rally round the man who now holds the responsible and onerous office of chief magistrate, and let him have our hearty and undivided support. Let a mistake, though dis-

played under circumstances which caused national mortification, not undermine our confidence in the man; his past life, his martyrdom for the sacred cause of ths union, is the best guarantee that he will prove himself worthy of the high office! Let him have our best wishes, our most fervent prayers. Being a southern man himself, he knows better than any man in the North how to distinguish between southern people and their leaders. With stern justice in the right hand, he will move forward, tempering it with mercy, and offering the olive branch of pardon and peace. Let us be confident that the executive office is safe in his hands, and that he will carry out the wishes of the loyal people in closing the rebellion. And when that day will come on which he will lay down on the grave of our murdered chief as a tribute of the people, the flag of the country, no star missing, no star darkened, all redeemed in their brightest glory, all shining in one glorious constellation, when he then will say: "The work thou hast begun is done and finished; the Union is now a Union in reality, the people are now an undivided nation in sentiment and institutions, and this end was attained by the hearty support of the people, and by their implicit confidence in their government;" brethren, then we will have honored the memory of the departed; then we will have celebrated this hour in a manner becoming the principles he proclaimed; then we may erect a monument with the epitaph: "A free, united and grateful nation to Abraham Lincoln, the preserver of the Union!"

Yes, illustrious martyr, this is the vow we make, swearing on the blood of thy wounds; these are the resolutions we are forming in this solemn hour of

national grief and national mourning. Thou shalt not have lived, thou shalt not have toiled and labored, to no purpose. We take up thy legacy, and will execute it faithfully and thoroughly; we will cleanse this land from treason and rebellion, that the country shall not be deluged again with the lifeblood of its children. We will forgive, as his example has taught us, the repentant sinner. Over the fresh grave of our hero we will take him back to our heart, sharing with him our blessings and our rights. We will, as thou hast admonished us, cooperate in regenerating the southern half of our Union, and repay the misery she has brought to our homes with unlimited love and mercy. We will stand firm to our government and to our flag till the work thou hast so gloriously begun shall come to a still more glorious end. Smile on! They can not bury the principle thou hast bequeathed us; thy name shall be as immortal as the truth of thy teaching. Abraham Lincoln, friend of the people, the poor and the slave, farewell! We will cherish and revere thy memory forever; for thou wast great, because thou wast good, and thou wast good because thou wast great. Farewell till God grants us a meeting in eternity.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN—AN APPRECIATION.[1]

The Proclamation of the President of the United States ordering us to convene in our houses of divine worship and to mourn for the untimely loss of our lamented martyr president, Abraham Lincoln, comes too late. Tears and mourning, sorrow and grief, can not be commanded. They are the genuine and spontaneous expressions of feelings wrung from the heart of men. They are the almost involuntary tribute we pay to the saddening events of life. They are the simple language of nature.

Mourn for Lincoln! Honor the illustrious dead! Was an order needed? Since history began to record the deeds and sentiments of men, there never was a man mourned and lamented for—never a deceased man honored as Lincoln was. Our president in life, he has become by death the president in a sort of a United States of the civilized world. "If plain and unpretending Lincoln," said even the London Times, "had been the imperial representative and heir of all the emperors and kings that had ruled the world for a thousand years, and had been as conspicuous for his illustrious birth and unquestionable power as for his virtues and goodness, his cruel and untimely death could not have been mourned with more deep-rooted and spontaneous affection." Calumny and prejudice had died with him, and the civilized world,

[1] Sermon delivered at the Broadway Synagogue, Cincinnati, June 10, 1865.

forming one grand chorus, united in singing his praise and bewailing his loss. What more could we wish him? What more could we do? The nation mourned a father; the world a benefactor and common friend. Greater reward can not be bestowed on any mortal man. It is the highest tribute possible to be paid to any man's memory.

Therefore, I said, the proclamation comes too late. But President Johnson is aware of these facts as well as we are; and yet, if he has ordained this day of prayer and commemoration, he has done it with the noble and ennobling intent that the calmed and repossessed mind of the nation once more may look back on the life of the departed martyr; that once more they may profit by his illustrious example; that once more they may swear allegiance to the sacred principle he has sealed with his blood; that once more they may resolve upon handing them down to posterity untarnished and unimpaired. Viewed in this light, the proclamation is a timely and proper one. For we have to honor Lincoln's memory, not only today, but for all time to come, verifying the words of the wise king: "The memory of the just will prove a blessing forevermore."

"Republics are ungrateful," is an old historical adage. With the honor of the office they bestow on any citizen, they are wont to believe they have canceled any debt for services, past and future, as well as for eminence of character and talent. And if any man overcomes this proverbial ingratitude; if year after year he becomes more endeared to the hearts of his countrymen; if they cherish his name and revere and idolize his memory, there must be in such a man some peculiar feature; in his public career

some peculiar characteristic that compels the nation to make an exception in his favor, and render an unwonted homage to his name and fame.

Lincoln was one of these uncommon men. The longer he was in office the more we learned to respect him. The more we became acquainted with his homespun virtues the more he won our affections. We do not weary of speaking of his life and his calamitous end. As sons bereft of a beloved and revered father find comfort in repeating again and again his words and his parental counsels, so the nation never wearies of dwelling on him and his life. Lincoln's name has become a household word in every family; it has become a domestic altar around which the nation meets with filial affection. No president, not even the Father of our Country, our immortal Washington, has taken so deep-rooted a hold of the nation's sympathy as plain and unassuming Lincoln did.

And what is the cause of this unusual gratitude and love? That none of our public men were so thoroughly identified with the people as he was. He was emphatically one of the people—feeling as they felt, thinking as they think, speaking as they speak, looking upon matters from their point of view. There was a homeliness and simplicity about him—a quaint humor, a genial nature, a sterling rectitude of character, peculiarly adapted to win for him the sympaty and regard of the great masses of mankind.

Yes, he was emphatically one of the people. Republics have their aristocracies too. There is the aristocracy of inherited or self-won wealth; the aristocracy of privileged education and special training; the social aristocracy of fashionable and hightoned

life. The masses stand aloof and separated from the company of those elect circles. And there was nothing in Lincoln to associate him with these classes. He earned in early youth his living by dire manual labor.

He had to struggle for the scanty knowledge of mere reading and writing. He had to rely on his own untiring exertions for the acquisition of more profound studies. Living out in the far West he was excluded and saved from the hypocritical polish of fashionable manners. He preserved in their natural purity the customs and simplicity of the people. Thus he remained one of them during the whole of his public career. In his presence they did not feel themselves humbled, as in the presence of stately Washington, of grand-minded Webster, of eagle-eyed Clay—they felt at home with him like in the house of one of their farming neighbors, and his loss was felt by them as if one of their most intimate friends had been stricken down.

The great masses of mankind are kind and good-hearted. Uncouth as their manners may be, rough as the outbursts of their feelings may now and then appear, there is at the bottom of their nature a fountain-well of kindness that on every occasion gushes and rushes forth with blessing, might and power. And wherever they meet with the same genuine virtue in their fellow men, their lively sympathy is enlisted. And here again Lincoln was the truest representative of the great masses. His heart was his title to nature's nobility, his indisputable right to mankind's love. "Love your fellow men as yourself" was with him not the unreachable ideal of religion, but the North star principle of his life. To

forgive, to encourage, to make happy, was the steady, practical impulse of his heart. He did not temper justice with mercy; no, mercy reigned with him supreme and alone. How characteristic of his temper are his words when, having listened to the entreaties of a soldier's wife whose husband, a deserter, sentenced to be shot, and having granted the requested pardon, he turned to a friend and said: "I may have done wrong, but I have made that poor woman happy." Such deeds found their echo among the masses; such words enshrined him as one of them in their hearts. Neither the power of his office nor the loftiness of his position could ice or chill his heart. It beat with the same genuineness in the presidential chair as in the log cabin of Illinois.

The masses dislike haughtiness and are won and attracted by cordiality. The exclusiveness of official pomp, the display of extraordinary eloquence, though captivating for the moment, debars them from equal participation and puts them in a quaint, estranging position. They repay such leaders and chiefs with reverence and admiration. It must be a rare combination of circumstances if they are permitted to combine love with regard, heartfelt devotion with reverence. And this again was the case with Lincoln. Though placed in the highest office in the country, his language remained the plain, unadorned language of the people. Though wielding a power second to none of the mightiest sovereigns, his anecdotes, his pointed epigrams, his appropriate sayings were those of the masses. They understood him better than any other man; his illustrations came home to their simple unsophisticated minds; his arguments were not beyond their reach; and even his little rusticities only

showed more brightly, as does the rough matrix the gold ore, the deep sense of his assertions.

The masses love frankness, good faith and trustworthiness. In their daily intercourse, absorbed in the hard task of making a living, they have neither the time nor the inclination to indulge in intrigue, or to use diplomatic craft and cunning. In their plain, everyday transactions they take the word as it is given, and trust that the given word will be kept without reserve or deviation; for truth is congenial to human nature. And whose word could be more trusted than that of Abraham Lincoln? There was about him no diplomatic ambiguity, no stately duplicity, no dissembling of his real opinions. In his frank and honest style after due and mature consideration he said what he meant, and meant what he said; and his word was as good as the man, and the man as good as his word. And once his word pledged he stood firm as a rock—never faltering, never retreating; wiser than passion, more faithful than fury; never swayed by fear or despair, and hopeful in the darkest hour of unparalleled trial. Such frankness and such good faith convinced the people that there was none among them who could be trusted more, and all looked on him as the safest man and safest arbiter in the turning point of the history of our country.

And lastly, people honor disinterestedness and unselfish devotion to any good cause—how much more to the common good of the nation! In our age of money-worship this virtue is seldom to be found. On the battleground of wild competition self-interest and self-love play a most prominent part. But so much the more will we admire and cherish the man who

keeps aloof from the greed of the time and represents the better and nobler qualities of the human heart. Lincoln was such a man. The name—the only recommendation he brought from his home in the West—was the name of Honest Old Abe. That was his escutcheon; that the inscription on his coat-of-arms, and even his bitterest enemy did not dare to impeach it. His purity of deed was never challenged; his disinterestedness never suspected, and his honesty of purpose never impugned. They steadily became more apparent, and during his brief term of office he outlived all suspicions, jealousies and misconstructions.

Such a combination of rare qualities made him emphatically not only the country's, but the people's president. These peculiar traits of his character made his loss so generally, so widely and so deeply felt. And felicitously said Disraeli in the English House of Commons: "This calamity touches the heart of nations, and appeals to the domestic sentiment of mankind."

This and thus was the man. But we would not do full justice to his memory if we omitted to cast a glance, however short, on him as the president and leader in the last four eventful years. And here again he stands in the foremost rank of our history. Not as former presidents, since and after the days of Washington, who had only to look after the proper and fair working of the machinery of the government. No, he had to inaugurate a new era of our national history; he had to introduce us into new times, pregnant with the most important consequences. His responsibilities were the most overwhelming; his task the most gigantic—the issues de-

pending on success or failure, decisive for the future of the whole human race. The experience of our past history was of no avail to him; everything had to be created anew, had to tried and tested anew. The Revolutionary War of 1776 was almost forgotten; the eventful and glorious times of Washington were pushed far away into the background. Washington's matchless farewell address had become worthless, for his country had to be reorganized on other principles than those laid down in that patriarchal document. Webster's conciliatory master-speeches, Clay's patriotic compromise measures had to be shelved; for the crisis they sought to prevent had been forced upon us with inevitable reality. It required a firm hand, a stout heart, a calm and hopeful mind to guide the ship of state through the raging and ever-increasing storm. And the nation and the world stood asking with fearful uneasiness: "Is that rail-splitter the man fitted for such a tremendous crisis?"

And he proved himself to be the right man in the right place, though there never before in human history were so many momentous questions to the fore at once. The existence of our nation as the nation of the Union had to be asserted; the strength of the republican form of government had to be tested; the supreme right of free labor had to be vindicated, and the last medieval vestige of forced labor had to be wiped out. It was a time of crushing anxiety for us—for the whole world. Our and their all was at stake. Abroad, kings and nobles were in their glory; their false prophecies were to be verified; their common enemy was to be defeated; the great republic was doomed to a speedy dissolution. The liberty-

loving nations stood stupefied, hoping and praying for our success, but apprehensive of our failure. And at home? The enemy who had thrown down the gauntlet stood united and well prepared; we in the North unarmed and fatally divided. We had neither confidence in our strength nor faith in our principle. We thought the South were the fighting chivalry; we in the North were fitted only for peaceable pursuits. We thought the South was inspired for a principle; we in the North only for the worship of the almighty dollar. And the power of our government? We hardly knew that we had a government. We were accustomed to believe that it was fitted for the administration of peace, but not for the terrible emergencies of war. Whence, then, should we have taken courage? Whence fortitude and resolution? All therefore became confusion, thoughtlessness, helplessness; and the stoutest hearts began to fail and to doubt.

But Lincoln knew us better than we did ourselves. Himself a child of the masses, he knew the patriotic and uncorrupted loyalty of the masses. He took counsel not of our fears, but of his hope and the sanctity of our cause. He inspired us with confidence in our power and ability; he called on us to rally round our flag and they came—the men came, the treasure came, and the right men, in the right time, and the right place came; and the battle was fought and gloriously won. Mistakes were made; blunders were committed. Who denies them? Who disowns them? Who would not have committed them in a crisis so unprecedented and unexampled? But when failure after failure tended to discourage the stoutest hearts, Lincoln never failed and never quailed. He

stood firm, immovable, hopeful, trying and trying again till his firmness and his hope inspired the whole nation, and hecatombs of blood and treasure were offered willingly and unsparingly. And at last his hope was crowned with success and his firmness blessed with final victory; secession and state sovereignty were crushed—were annihilated; the star-spangled banner redeemed and restored to its old glory. The strength of the republican form of government has been tested and triumphantly asserted, and the existence of our nation as the nation of our Union supremely and incontestably vindicated.

Oh, then what a jubilee! The whole country was frantic with joy and triumph. Such tidings the wires had never before carried on their electric wings! Every heart felt proud to be an American. Every eye looked with a grateful smile up to the victorious stars and stripes. Every countenance gazed with reverence up to the man who had borne the nation's care, and should now reap the nation's love. We knew now what we had in him; we understood now what providential gift he was to the nation. We asked his pardon for our doubts, and offered for our shortcomings not the nation's official honor, but the nation's heart. The golden rays of victory won, and peace coming, should encircle his cherished brow as the nation's laurel, the nation's gift.

But no, no! The nation's martyr, already when alive, in the flush of victory, he was to fall as the nation's sacrifice and freedom's martyr. Oh, what a change, then! The mighty eagle stopped his soaring flight and drooped with bowed head. The folds of our flag, ashamed of their short-timed smile, wrapped themselves quickly into mourning. One cry

of agony and despair ran through the afflicted land, and around the sacred bier stood a nation in tears, and the world lamenting the loss of him who was so great and so good.

But let us turn away from this bloody sight. He, himself, would if he could, command us to forget it; his genuine goodness would warn us against punishment, against vengeance. Let us rather now apply our thoughts to the solemn duty now imposed upon us—how shall, how can we honor his beloved and cherished memory? And here again he himself in sublime and inspired words has taught us how to perform this duty of sacred and national gratitude.

When standing in the cemetery of Gettysburg, and consecrating that spot, now so sacred in our history, he said: "We have come to dedicate a portion of this field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that the nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense, we can not dedicate, we can not consecrate, we can not hallow this ground. It is for us, the living, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us; that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause to which they gave the last full measure of devotion."

Yes, brethren, if we wish to honor his memory let us dedicate ourselves to the great work he left to us. Let us consecrate ourselves to minister well the legacy of sacred principles he has bequeathed to us.

And, therefore, do you love and honor Lincoln's name and fame? So love and honor above all lib-

erty and Union. The whole country's motto must henceforth be, "Liberty and Union, one and inseparable, now and forever." He has left us one country and not sovereignties. He has shown us we have a government as powerful in war as it is gentle in peace. He has given us an army and navy second to none on this globe, able to maintain the honor of the flag at home, and strong enough to command the respect of the nations abroad. And over this imperial Union stands supreme the spirit of Liberty, granting equal rights to all races and all denominations, teaching and preaching that a government of the people, by the people and for the people, is the best, the wisest, the strongest, and the most moral of all governments. It has been tried and found not wanting. We knew all these truths, theoretically, long ago; but now they are proved practically. Let us keep, then, this precious jewel, bought with the lives of hundreds of thousands of our best citizens, and set and encircled by the costliest blood of our martyr-president, and let us guard it as the dearest heirloom we can bequeath to our—to the world's posterity.

Do you wish to honor his memory? Try to finish that part of his work he left undone and do it in the spirit of the noble words last addressed to the whole nation: "With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in." "With malice towards none!" the South lies conquered and subjugated at our feet. She has sown the wind and has reaped the whirlwind. But now she is no longer our foe; she is part and parcel of our family. We must assist her in

healing her deep and sore wounds. "With charity for all," we must help her to recover her former flourishing condition. We must feed and clothe her; we must take care of her widows and orphans; by the hand of free labor we must redeem her devastated territory. We must learn not only to forgive, but also to forget, so that the South, seeing her sin repaid by love and charity, may come back in sincere repentance, resolved to wipe out, by future deeds of loyal patriotism, the shame and disgrace of past rebellion. The Union—then a Union not of the law and the sword, but of sentiment and brotherly feeling—will inscribe with tears of joy and gratitude on Lincoln's monument the appropriate words, "The united nation to the savior of the country."

Do you wish to honor his memory? Then remember, you can not do anything for him himself; but as he said in his last inaugural address, "Care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphans." They have fought our and his battles, and more than appropriate, true and touching was, during the military pageant of last week, the inscription on the capitol, "The only national debt we never can pay is the debt we owe to the victorious Union soldiers." The nation, the states and the individual citizens have to take care of and to nurse the invalid, to provide for the disabled and to assist the returning hero, who again has to follow the blissful pursuits of peace. If they want money give it, and give it freely, and do not consider it a mite of charity. If they want work, consider it your duty to procure it, and let them have the preference. If they want your advice and assistance, give both with a good will and grateful heart. They were our liberal

creditors—let us pay them like honest debtors. By such acts we will redeem the nation's debt; by such acts we will show ourselves as citizens worthy of our republic. By such deeds we will honor the memory of Lincoln and carry out his last will and noble aspirations.

And we shall and will do it, illustrious martyr! We promise it to thee in this solemn hour of mourning! Sleep thou in peace; thy work shall and will be finished! Hand in hand we will work as thou hast said, "To bind up the nation's wounds, and do all that may achieve and cherish a lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations." Hand in hand we will strive that no scar be left; that the nation, revived through all her members, shall begin a new era of unequaled progress and prosperity; and that just and impartial history may record the fact. This new era dates from the life of our great and good Abraham Lincoln.

MODERN JUDAISM.[1]

The sacred and solemn ceremony has been performed amidst rejoicings and thanksgivings; the cornerstone of the new Hebrew Temple to be erected in this goodly and flourishing city has been laid. And it is not more than right and befitting that you have selected this day for solemnizing this prosperous festival. On the day on which the whole country rejoices that a new cornerstone for the temple of its future and unrivaled grandeur has been laid; on the day on which a whole nation joins in prayer, gladness and thanksgiving for the good tidings of peace, victory and national salvation—on this day we Israelites, too, offer our devotion to the Giver of all good, and endeavor to prove by our deeds and actions how much we are willing to contribute our mite to the sacred and glorious principles which are celebrated today from Plymouth Rock to the gold-bearing hills of California.

The occasion is so great, the causes for rejoicing so many today, that we are unable to do justice to them in half an hour's oration. I must be brief, and you will forbear with me if I will give you but a sketch of the glorious reasons which inspire us today with thanksgiving and rejoicing.

So let me then dwell first on the national feast, for

[1] Address delivered on Thanksgiving Day, 1865, on the occasion of laying the cornerstone of the new temple at Indianapolis, Indiana.

according to the saying of our old rabbis, "The law of the land is supreme," the festival of the land takes precedence over our sectarian rejoicing, and before we give expression to the feelings of our gladness as Israelites, let us do homage to our pride and glory as Americans.

It is a prosperous sign that most of the states have united in appointing as a day of national thanksgiving that day which had been appointed by our matchless and patriotic president. Governor after governor rescinded their former state proclamations and adopted the day fixed upon by the president of the United States—a good sign that the sovereignty of the states henceforth will yield to the sovereignty of the nation and the majesty of the country will overshadow the majesty of the states.

And that is right—the country first; and above all, above every religious or political institution. Yes, our country—for now, for the first time in history we have a country one and indivisible. The old adage, "United we stand; divided we fall," as good as it may be in some senses, has not attained the glory of our experience; for we have changed it into that sublime motto, "United we stand, and divided we will and must stand anyhow." The words of Jackson, "The Union must and shall be preserved," then only a threat and a prophecy, is now a truth, and a historical stubborn matter of fact signed by the blood and sealed by the victory of the nation. Today the nation rejoices in the certainty that "we have a country, and such a free country as there never was witnessed in the history of the human race!"

For heretofore our whole national existence was

considered a mere trial, a political experiment. The wise and experienced statesmen of Europe had no faith in it; they predicted, at the first crisis, our speedy downfall, our ignominious dissolution; our patriotism they considered vainglory, the love for our institutions vain boasting; the reliance on our might and resources a ridiculous self-deception, and "American Humbug" was the epithet given to our national life. But on this day the tables are completely turned. Humbug is the proper epithet for all European affairs, while with us there is stern, hopeful reality. Liberty and equality, humanity and enlightenment are with us no mere sounds and empty words; no, even Lord Russell, the representative of doubtful Albion, calls this, our country, in his speech at the lord mayor's banquet, "the mighty and great republic!"

And our people? It is the best and greatest on God's sunny earth. Look on; Italy, liberty-loving Italy, needs now one hundred million dollars to cover its expenditures; France needs another one hundred million dollars to meet her extra liabilities; Austria goes begging in Europe for thirty million dollars to run the government machinery. And there is going on all over Europe a financiering, a curtailing, a debating, as if the specie of the whole globe were required to meet undelayable demands. And in our country our McCulloch can have one hundred million dollars before breakfast; enormous taxes are paid willingly, without a word of complaint; and even the London Times, our inveterate enemy, acknowledges that on strict principles of national economy national bankruptcy ought to have happened long ago. But this country seems to set at naught

all rule and precedent; it baffles continually expectation, and turns prophecy to folly.

And again the charity, the "almighty dollar" patriotism of our people? In Germany the spirit for the oppressed Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein was aroused during the past years. Speeches were made, songs were composed, committees were appointed, a national subscription was organized—and the sum raised after all these efforts amounted to two hundred and sixty-six thousand thalers. And in our country, without extra exertions, without any boasting, two hundred and fourteen million dollars in free contributions was laid down on the altar of the country for sanitary commissions and for the support of soldiers' families. A nation's gift, a nation's charity offered, a nation's debt paid in the midst of the Civil War—who dares merely to compare the figures of American patriotism with the snug little ciphers of "European Humbug?"

And our navy and our army? God bless them and their families forevermore—where are they? Eight hundred and fifty thousand men disbanded and disarmed with the stroke of a pen—and back they are at work in the fields and in the shops. The general of some six months ago is now a lawyer in some country town, without pension, and not pretending to have any claim against his country. What shall we, what shall the world admire more, the heroic valor of the soldier in the field, or his obedience to the law as citizen? Oh, they feel it in Europe that here on our soil "right is might, and not might right." The princes know that our country is the great power among the nations, and the people across the ocean looking to us for their redemption, shout

in joy and reverence, "Westward moves the star of empire!"

And our treatment of the rebels? In Europe new dungeons would have had to be built after such a catastrophe; criminal courts like in the time of the Tower and the Bastille would have sprung up like mushrooms, and numberless scaffolds would have groaned under the weight of numberless victims. But with us? A few assassins and human monsters only suffered the extreme penalty; all the rest are pardoned. No revenge! No bloodshed! No national disgrace! All humanity, all kindness worthy of our free and grand institutions! Our star-spangled banner shines forth, emblazoned not only with glory and victory, but with every emblem of human and moral excellence; and on the horizon of our future dawns nothing but peace, union and common liberty!

Therefore the nation is rejoicing today; therefore it is offering thanksgivings before the altar of the Most High; therefore its jubilee and anthems are ringing in the welkin—for from whatever point of view we consider our country, it shines forth as the beaconlight of all nations. What heretofore was mere hope is now glorious reality; what was only expectation is now matter of fact. It is proved and proved for all generations to come that the government "of the people, by the people and for the people," as our immortal Lincoln said, is the best of all governments; it is proved, and beyond refutation, that a nation defending its own rights and privileges is invincible on the field and inexhaustible in its means and resources. It has been proved, and proved for the whole human race, that liberty, religious and civil liberty, unfettered and unlimited, inspires man to the

most patriotic deeds and incredible self-denial; that liberty ennobles man and leads nations to the highest pinnacle of glory and prosperity. Oh, not we alone, but the whole civilized world, should join with us in one grand hallelujah, singing: "This day the Lord has given us; let us rejoice and be glad of it."

And who should do it with more fervent devotion than we Israelites? Oh, Americans, you can not appreciate the grandeur of your institutions, the nobility of your people! Born on the soil of a free country, raised on the flag of free institutions, nursed with the idea of liberty, you think it must be so and can not be otherwise. But we who have suffered all kind of persecution, suffered for eighteen long centuries, we know how to value the blessings of American liberty. You received us here, not asking: "From what country art thou coming? From what race art thou descending? To what creed and denomination art thou belonging?" No; the only question was and is: "Art thou a man? Well, then, go forth and enjoy the innate rights of a man!" Here, on this sacred soil of virgin liberty, there was no discussion about religious toleration or political emancipation; there was no bargaining about the self-evident truth and right of man—no, the immortal signers of the Declaration of Independence knew of no bigotry and no political prejudices; they knew man merely as man, and as such adjusted to everyone equal rights and enjoyments; and what they had so gloriously begun, our generation, not less glorious and not less immortal, has vindicated valiantly; and there floats our banner, welcoming Gentile or Jew under its heavenly folds and securing to one and to all the same right, the same protection.

Therefore, it is so very becoming that you, my dear coreligionists, have selected this day of national thanksgiving for laying the cornerstone of your new temple. You, too, wish to erect a house of God in which you will offer your gratitude after the creed and dogmas of your fathers and its foundation shall date from that day on which the nation once more asserted: "Religious liberty shall be the common boon of all citizens." Henceforth the synagogue has no more to hide itself in a secluded ghetto; the synagogue shall no longer be forbidden to promulgate its doctrines and teachings—no, the synagogue shall take its proper place and proper rank among the synagogues and churches, and in this age of free inquiry bring its tenets, too, before the tribunal of reason, to prove that they are compatible with the progress of our age and the advancing ideas of American liberty.

And thus, when asked, "What are the doctrines, what are the ideas to the worship of which you are going to erect this temple?" we will answer: "Here are the three doctrines which shall be taught here as the essence of Judaism and the Mosaic religion—First, there is a God, one, indivisible, eternal, spiritual, most holy and most perfect. Second, there is an immortal life, and man is a son of eternity. Thirdly, love thy fellow men without distinction of creed or race as thyself, and man's duties are virtue and justice, love and benevolence." This creed is compatible with our American constitution; these doctrines answer the purpose of all ages to come; these tenets enable us to be as good sons of our sacred covenant as we are faithful and loyal citizens of our country.

These words inscribe on your cornerstone, as the leading motto of American Israelites, and then add

to it, "No religious intolerance." Thank God, our old rabbis have already laid down for us the glorious principle, "The good and moral men of all denominations shall participate in the future bliss of Heaven." What they asserted in the dark ages of medieval bigotry, what other creeds have heretofore not as yet adopted, let remain our guide and our motto; and let the temple to be erected on this spot be a witness to this solemn and important truth. Oh, I can not let these remarks pass without offering on this occasion our sincere thanks to the enlightened legislature of Indiana, who last year so gloriously maintained the principle, "Religious intolerance shall not defile the sacred and free soil of America." When some men intended to give this nation a sectarian name, they nobly resisted the attempt, and proclaimed once more, "State and church remain forever separated in America." Thank them for their wisdom; thank them for their justice. And we, we can not celebrate this day in a more becoming and truly American style than by declaring: "This house of God shall be devoted to the principle, 'No religious fanaticism.'" For we will adhere to the words of the prophets, "Every nation may walk in the way of its religion, and we in the name of the Lord our God." For has not one God created us all? Have we not all but one Father? Why should we become faithless one to another, to defile the covenant of our fathers?

And finally, as our age is progressive and this festive day is testifying to the common progress of our race, so let then the temple to be erected here, be devoted to progress and general enlightenment. Religion can not remain stationary while every department of human life is undergoing mighty changes.

Religion can not adhere autocratically to medieval tenets, when the whole tendency of our modern age is pointing to new developments. Religion, too, has to adapt itself to modern changes and to modern ideas—if hypocrisy shall not rule supreme or doubt and skepticism shall not undermine its whole fabric. No, life and religion must be one and the same; life and religion must be reconciled, and then can we hope for the truth in the state and truth in the church and for a moral general elevation, worthy of the man and the citizen. Thank God, our creed grants us the right of reform. Let the new temple be devoted to this sacred cause; let us strive and endeavor that our services may reflect the constitution of our country and the constitution of our religion; let a mode of worship be established here answering the free spirit of Judaism and the free spirit of our blessed land; let us reconcile our religion with the demands of our age, that all nations may say with Moses, "This is your wisdom and your understanding in the eyes of all nations!"

So may then this temple rise to its future glory, a powerful witness to truth and liberty, to progress and reform! May its cornerstone testify to our faith in our covenant and to our loyalty as citizens! May the remembrance of this double festival remind us of our gratitude to the God of Israel, and our indebtedness to our blessed country! May it verify, when finished, the words of the prophet: "And the glory of the second temple shall be greater than that of the first one." Hallelujah, Amen!

THE PLATFORM OF JUDAISM.[1]

Whenever the cornerstone of a divine temple or any other public building is laid, it is customary to deposit in a box prepared for the special purpose certain documents referring to the history connected therewith, and pointing out the aim to which that building in progress of erection is going to be devoted.

On this day, so solemn and important to our congregation—the eldest Hebrew one in this western city—we have prepared similar documents. We are going to deposit in the cornerstone of the new temple the first sermon delivered by Mr. Jonas, the first Israelite who arrived in this city; a short sketch of the history of this congregation, written by Phineas Moses, Esq., one of the oldest members of this, the first synagogue in Cincinnati; a list of the members of the congregation; the names of all the gentlemen who so liberally donated forty thousand dollars for the purchase of the lot situated at Mound and Eighth Streets; the names of the officers and the building committees of the congregation; the names of our sister congregations and the numerous Hebrew benevolent institutions of this city; the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Ohio, and, with other interesting papers, the document containing the details of the impressive ceremony we are going to perform this afternoon.

[1] Address delivered at the laying of the cornerstone of the Mound Street Temple, Cincinnati, June 5, 1868.

But, brethren, as proper and befitting as this old custom may be, it is only the outward form of the ceremony. It is not its essence, its enlivening spirit. This spirit consists in declaring the principles which will govern the divine worship in our new temples; the ideas which must rule their votaries. This spirit consists in proclaiming the doctrines of Judaism as it is understood by the living generation of our race and people.

This duty has become imperative, partly because Judaism is badly misunderstood and misrepresented, and partly in order to define the platform which we Israelites intend to occupy during the religious crisis which is threatening our beloved country.

It can not and will not be denied that in several quarters strenuous efforts are made to gain, first a sectarian supremacy, and then and thereby a political ascendency. These efforts are neither concealed nor disguised. And all patriots having the liberty and welfare of their country at heart are looking with uneasiness towards the darkening future. Twenty-three years ago when I arrived on the blessed shores of this country, no apprehensions of this kind were prevailing. Then the sky, the air, life in all its elements were American throughout, and nothing but American. There was less theology, but more true religion.

There was less religious controversy, but more true religious brotherly love and fellowship. There was no religious prejudice, no sectarian animosity, but all parts of the country were inspired by the noble sentiments of American liberty. Times and things have greatly changed for the worse; and it is but a few weeks ago that I was accosted by some

true and sincere-hearted Americans with these questions:

"Which side will you Israelites take? What is the platform you are occupying? Let us know what Judaism is in order that we may ascertain the value and worth of your doctrines and votaries."

Well, brethren, this is a befitting occasion for answering these important questions, to display the spiritual cornerstone on which our new temple shall rest.

The first principle that shall lead and guide us is the supreme authority of the American Constitution; not only according to its letter, but to its divine and ennobling spirit. I was lately visiting in New York. On a car two gentlemen engaged in a lively debate on the question, "Which comes first, the government or the church?" I joined the debate, and as a Jew unhesitatingly took the part of him who advocated, "First the constitution and then the church." The Jews consider and revere this sublime document almost like a new revelation. By its decree the religious animosities, dating from bygone ages, are intended to be erased from the records of future human history; by its spirit every man shall and may worship God according to the dictates of his conscience, but outside of the pale of the church we shall be but citizens and brethren. We Jews owe our first allegiance to this constitution. As American citizens, without any subterfuge, we consider it our supreme law. We do not wish to abuse the liberties it is granting for the glorification of our church. No, we shall abide by its truly religious spirit, which fosters general good will and toleration. Reasserting as it does the glorious words of the old prophet: "Every

nation may walk in the ways of their gods, but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God," this word of toleration must be our unswerving North Star, pointing to the constitution as the supreme and and most blissful law of the country.

Hence, secondly, we shall always join the ranks of those who advocate the separation of state and church. This is the leading principle of the political reform now at work all over Europe. We perceive, in spite of all opposition, its astonishing results both in England and in Austria. Let us hope, let us pray and work that, banished from the old continent, it will not emigrate to our country. As soon as it would set foot on these shores, as soon as it would be allowed to take root in this virgin soil of liberty, the doom of our country and its glorious institutions would be sealed. We should have here a second edition of the gloomy fate of the South American republics. A state religion would be inaugurated, with all its accoutrements of bigotry, fanaticism, and religious persecution. We should have here a second Spain with her intolerance and religious oppressions. The sun of American liberty would set forever, and an Egyptian darkness of priestcraft would dim and blind the piercing eye of the American eagle. No, we are going to lay our cornerstone with the sublime motto, "Eternal separation of state and church!"

For this reason we shall never favor or ask any support for our various benevolent institutions by the state; and if offered, we should not only refuse, but reject it with scorn and indignation, for those measures are the first sophistical, well-premeditated steps for a future union of church and state. Sectarian institutions must be supported by their sectarian fol-

lowers; the public purse and treasury dares not be filled, taxed and emptied for sectarian purposes. For this very same reason we Israelites are the very sincere friends and strenuous advocates of our free public schools. Of course we are going to build schoolrooms below our new temple; but they will only be used for our Sabbath school. The Sabbath school, conducted on Sabbath and Sunday, affords us ample time and opportunity for imparting to our children the doctrines of our religion. This aim once accomplished, we wish them, from their earliest boyhood, to associate with their American playmates, in order to become "Americanized" in every way and respect. They shall learn to love their country above all, to respect and foster its glorious and free institutions.

For we Israelites of the present age do not dream any longer about the restoration of Palestine and the Messiah crowned with a diadem of earthly power and glory. America is our Palestine; here is our Zion and Jerusalem; Washington and the signers of the glorious Declaration of Independence—of universal human right, liberty and happiness—are our deliverers, and the time when their doctrines will be recognized and carried into effect is the time so hopefully forestalled by our great prophets. When men will live together united in brotherly love, peace, justice and mutual benevolence, then the Messiah has come indeed, and the spirit of the Lord will have been revealed to all his creatures.

For this reason we hail with joy and satisfaction the organizations of the so-called secret orders, be their names Free Masons, Odd Fellows, or any kindred institutions. Wherever the existence of a God is taught; wherever men, breaking down all barriers

of separation, meet on the platform of common love, charity and fraternity, there we find the signs of the real Kingdom of Heaven; there we greet the dawning of that morning which will bring unto us better tidings! We expect from such organizations only the best results for mutual reconciliation, and apprehend from them dangers neither for religion or human society.

This is the spiritual cornerstone on which we are going to rear our new temple; these are the ideas which lead and guide Judaism in its relation to our country and fellow citizens; and in conformity with these ideas we are reorganizing our mode of worship and progress, and have initiated the era of modern reform.

Yes, "Reform" has become the watchword, the cornerstone of modern Judaism. All old prayers referring to a return to Palestine, to a rehabilitation of sacrifices and all such obsolete ideas and ceremonies have to be and will be abolished. Religion has to adapt itself to the altered political situation and to the changes wrought by the reconciling spirit of the age. Religion has to adapt itself to the progress made in all the departments of human science and knowledge and take the incontestable results accruing therefrom. Any religion disregarding these manifest changes must either rely upon the ignorance or superstition of the masses or come into flagrant opposition with the human race. The result of such a stubborn opposition will be either a most lamentable state of hypocrisy or the future ruin of religion or the state. We intend and endeavor to assist in this reconciliation of the highest interests of humanity. We apprehend from these endeavors no danger to our

creed, for truth will conquer anyhow, and truth, like God himself, can never be in contradiction with itself. And if to this general reform we will ever continue to add the reform of ourselves, what a glorious house of God will the new temple be! I do not wish to mar the sentiments of this joyful and solemn occasion by thoughts of reproach and admonition.

I delight in your enthusiasm of today, but I have no faith in fireworks enthusiasm. I do not believe in those holy rockets which so brilliantly soar up to heaven, but get extinguished before they reach it. No, "An eternal fire shall burn upon the holy altar; it shall never be extinguished." What a shame it would be to build a gorgeous temple and then, when finished, to leave it empty and desolate. What a folly would it be to spend one hundred and fifty thousand dollars to no purpose whatsoever!

No, brethren, let the enthusiasm of today be the harbinger for a lasting, ever-growing love for the house we are going to erect. Then this temple will be an honor to the congregation and to each of its members; it will be a monument of glory to Israel, a blessing to humanity, an ornament to the city, redounding to the glory of God, and preaching and teaching good will to all men.

With these sentiments let us now form our line of procession. May the great principles we have laid down inspire us when laying the cornerstone; and when we shall dedicate this temple to the worship of the one, indivisible, spiritual and eternal God of Israel, the Father of the whole human race, may He, the great Architect of the Universe, be with us and assist us in His divine grace and mercy, forever and ever. Amen.

CAN A JEW GO TO HEAVEN?

(1868)

On last Saturday evening, while going up Vine Street, I passed two young ladies engaged in a very lively discussion. "I do not think that any Jew will go to Heaven," remarked the one. "Of course not," replied the other; and with these words they were out of my hearing.

I was stunned. For some time I was absorbed in thought on this wholesale sweeping condemnation. "This crushing sentence," I said to myself, "is the echo of the theology of the religion of the majority. This sentence is the final verdict of a theology which claims to preach the doctrines of supreme love and divine mercy. These words are the result of the instruction which claims to impart the sublime lesson that God is our Father and we all His beloved children. "No, no," I cried to Heaven, lit up by the altar-lamps of the stars, "these words can not be true. Forgive them, Almighty Father, they do not know what they are saying."

Indeed, it matters very little to what Christian denomination we may turn—everywhere we hear the same distressing verdict. The Catholic religion claims to be alone the only saving church; everyone and everybody outside of its precincts is lost and doomed to eternal perdition. The Protestant religion points to faith in a miraculous redemption; without that

special faith the purest and most virtuous life is asserted to be without either merit or value. Calvinism is still more rigorous and austere. By its theory of preordination it maintains that God elects some men for everlasting happiness, and others for everlasting misery—a divine decree from which there is no escape either by leading the most virtuous or the most vicious and most sinful life.

I do not wish to engage in religious controversies. I am a man doing homage to the broadest platform of religious liberty and toleration. I believe in the great modern principle of Frederick the Great: "Let everyone be saved according to his own fashion." But when a doctrine is uttered, coming home with such crushing, universal condemnation, then I deem it my duty to examine it, both for the sake of my own peace and spiritual comfort and for the interest of the human race in general.

And, indeed, I do not know what in the miraculous doctrine of salvation I shall condemn—no, no, we never condemn—I meant only to say, I know not what I shall more pity, the heartlessness of this doctrine, or its thoughtlessness and shocking blasphemy against God's eternal justice, love and mercy.

Now there are thousands and tens of thousands of innocent children torn away from the mother's bosom, from the father's heart, before they know how to distinguish between good and evil; sweet, innocent, little creatures who are carried away to the grave before the sun of life has opened their young buds; angels on earth, who have never been contaminated even by the atmosphere of sin and wrong. And they shall be doomed to lasting perdition because they are born in another denomination, because the rites of a

certain church have not been administered to them? "Be it far from Thee, Judge of the whole earth, that Thou shouldst not do justice."

There are hundreds of millions of men whom the words of the New Testament have never reached, who live happy and contented in the religion of their ancestors; there are thousands and tens of thousands among them, as good, as honest, as moral and as charitable as the best ones of the modern denominations, and all these people shall indiscriminately be doomed to perdition and torture in hell, because they were born in another faith, and do or could not subscribe to certain dogmas of the domineering theology? "Be it far from Thee, Judge of the whole earth, that Thou shouldst not do justice."

There are men in our midst with whom we are daily associating, whom we delight to receive in our homes; whose honesty is undoubted, whose integrity is widely recognized; whose moral worth entitles them to our unbiased regard, whose charity is unlimited, and free from every sectarian prejudice; but they are Jews, and in spite of all their sterling virtues they are said to be excluded from salvation and doomed to everlasting perdition. But that adulterer, who disturbed the peace of a happy family and led a life of lewdness and debauchery; that felon and highwayman, who wantonly outraged man's life and property; that murderer, who by order of human justice expiates his crime on the gallows—they, all of them, if in the last moments of their vicious life they comply with certain ordinances of sectarian theology, shall be better, worthier in the eyes of Eternal Justice and Wisdom than the really good and moral man!

Never, never! "Be it far from Thee, Judge of all the earth, that Thou shouldst not do justice!"

There is a general outcry heard nowadays that our age makes a religion of irreligion; that this sentiment leads toward indifferentism, or rather to a tone of mind lower even than that. Is it to be wondered at? Can the human mind, in its advanced state and condition, subscribe to these perverted and distorted ideas of God's justice and government? Never! The thinker, the investigator, the man who does not swear by the teachings of his sectarian clergyman, but ventures to think for himself, must needs become an infidel—not to religion—but to the doctrine of theology. The thoughtless masses, who never think for themselves, and are contented with listening to a leader who takes the trouble of thinking for them, may still be counted among the staunch followers and supporters of theological dogmas. The enlightened classes will no longer stand the contradiction between their better knowing and the church doctrine.

While in the scientific department of life every new discovery adduces a new argument for the wisdom and harmony of the one plan and scheme that pervades in eternal order the great universe; while in the political arena the great spirit of the age is striving to remove all anomalies and exceptions, and to lay the foundation for a future kingdom of universal equality and justice; while the sentiments of men, so long estranged from one another by church and state, try to establish an empire of common love and brotherhood; shall those who are in the van of civilization recognize in the heavenly government another code of justice and righteousness than the one which

the voice of conscience implanted by God in man demands and requires for the management of our earthly affairs?

Shall we be bound to admit that on earth man is treated and judged according to his moral worth and in Heaven merely according to his faith? Shall we assent that on earth the good man, for his good deeds and actions, is rewarded with the general regard and esteem, but that in Heaven the criminal, by complying with certain church rites, stands higher than the man of moral virtue and excellence if born in another faith? that the latter is doomed to the tortures and pangs of hell, while the criminal enjoys the undeserved privilege of eternal bliss and happiness?

Oh, if divine justice is so totally different from human justice, if the heavenly government is so widely variant with all that our conscience and experience teach us to be good, true and holy, then let us at once sever all connections that tie us to our heavenly relations; then let us discard all ideas which foster the widest contradictions in the guidance of our life, and let us without an idea of God, or a faith in immortality, plunge into materialism or atheism, which at least will grant us peace within ourselves and harmony in our consciences.

But, thank Heaven, there is no cause for such an alarming crisis; we may cheerfully dispel all apprehensions as to such an agonizing choice. From all enlightened quarters a cry of indignation is raised against this theological injustice, this blasphemous dogmatism. The better portion of mankind wish to live in brotherly love and harmony, and dislike to be any longer distracted by religious prejudices. The

old theory, "A Jew or a heathen, though a good and moral man, can not go to Heaven," will e'er long belong to the obsolete notions which are buried, obliterated and forgotten. The voluminous theological treatises on such subjects will be stored away as food for moths; while mankind, united in the religion of unprejudiced justice and brotherly love, will inaugurate the kingdom of "peace on earth, and good will to all men."

One word more and I have done. The question naturally is suggested, "And what does the Jewish religion teach on this subject?" I shall answer it in a few concise sentences. Our religion has been often reproached with the assertion that it does not teach the doctrine of immortality. Well, over four hundred years before the advent of the Christian religion it was already said in Ecclesiastes xii, 7: "Then shall the dust return to the dust as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God, who gave it." This teaches immortality plainly and explicitly and beyond all controversy. And what will come after the grave? How will the future existence be constituted? This question is answered quite as plainly as the first one by Moses, in his farewell address to his people, Deuteronomy xxix, 29: "The secret things belong to the Lord our God." Only one sentence more was added by our teachers of yore, to this sublime saying of their predecessor, namely, the great word: "The good ones of all nations and denominations shall participate in the future bliss of Heaven." This is our doctrine, the Jewish doctrine, a teaching full of truth, justice and sincere, religious brotherly love.

Oh, my friends, adhere to it forever. Try by all means to propagate and to foster this spirit of true

religion. It will assist in reconciling distracted mankind; it will help in removing the old hatred, the discordant prejudices. We shall love our fellow men, of whatever race or denomination, as ourselves; and thus complying with the most sacred and sublime dictates of Scripture we shall inaugurate the era of the real religion of love, truth and unbiased justice, for which all true and good men are longing, and which will be the true and full redemption and resurrection of the human race.

THE PREJUDICE AGAINST THE JEWS.

(1870.)

Text—Zachariah viii, 16. "Speak ye every man the truth of his neighbor. Execute the judgment of peace and truth in your gates."

Our age is emphatically called the age of progress. In the realm of science discovery throngs discovery. Problems which have been thought mysterious and unknowable are solved, and the veil of mystery is removed. With this advance old prejudices are vanishing, and the rule of eternal laws is more and more recognized.

In the realm of politics, too, the same progress is marked everywhere. The old distinction between privileged classes and obedient subjects is giving way. The citizen takes the place of the subject. Right, justice and equality begin to rule instead of an autocratic and bureaucratic government. Old prejudices one after the other are being surrendered, as the modern state deals but with citizens and their rights and duties, disregarding all the old traditional follies and exemptions.

There is but one province in which this progress is not noticeable. It is the province of religion.

Religion, which, according to its pretensions of love and humanity, should first and above all try to unite and reconcile the human family, keeps up the old feuds and dissensions, and estranges men from

one another more and more. Here the old prejudice, the old religious aversion is not giving way. Some even think that certain classes would not be unwilling to revive and to reenact old medieval laws if the strong arm of the modern state would allow them to do it. But the modern state, with its enlightened ideas of liberty, equality and freedom is far ahead of the hostile principles of the church and her theology. It holds the latter in bounds and forces her to observe that love and justice which she is continually preaching, but never practicing. She is practically the whole year in contradiction with her teachings of divine and human love.

Hence religious prejudice is so slow in giving way. Proof thereof is the silent animosity that reigns between Catholics and Protestants. There is no peace, but only an armed truce, both parties abiding their time and opportunity. They have to keep peace, not by their own free will, but by command and authority of the state.

But, after all, it does not concern us Israelites directly how the Catholics with their infallibility and the Protestants with their idea of a "Protestant state and Protestant country" will settle their mutual difficulties. Time will tell whether they will push their pretensions to an open conflict, or acquiesce and submit to the authority and law of the country; whether they will foster their aversions, or remove the old bigoted prejudices. What interests us Israelites directly is the prejudice against the Jews, which up to this day is not extinguished. Latent, like the latent heat, it exists; and hence it becomes our imperative duty to examine the causes thereof, to refute them, and to eradicate the evil with all its roots.

Let us try to enumerate all the various reproaches and suspicions. Are we Israelites perhaps strangers and foreigners in the country in which we live? We have abolished all prayers referring to a return to Palestine, and we have declared in our conferences, in our papers and in our pulpits that the country we live in is our home and our fatherland; and that we owe allegiance to nobody else. Jerusalem may be considered as the cradle of our religion, as it is revered also by Catholics and Protestants as a holy city, but it is all a matter of reverential memory with these, and we know as our fatherland no other country but the one we are living in.

Are we perhaps not loyal citizens of the country we all call our home and the home of our children? Nobody, I am sure, will accost us with such an ill-founded reproach. Go all over Europe and you find the Jews in the public service of their respective countries. The Jewish Lord Mayor of London, the Jewish Secretaries of the Treasury in Holland and Baden, the host of Jewish officials in the public service have all reflected credit on their people and their countries. Read the history of European wars, examine the list of their armies, review the history of those who have fallen on their battlefields, visit the military cemeteries all over the globe, and you will everywhere find the testimony that with his blood and treasure the Jew has sealed his loyalty to his country, and yields to none in patriotism and loyal devotion.

Or are we perhaps averse to the progress of civilization? Do we, like Egyptian mummies, as we are sometimes nicknamed, merely cling to the past, and have no sense for the spirit of the age, its wants and demands? Go to any of the European universi-

ties; examine any department of human knowledge and inquiry, and you will find Jews everywhere, some of them foremost in the ranks, and friends even of a Humboldt, Arago and the other bright stars on the horizon of human wisdom. Go to the theaters, and who does not listen with admiration to the compositions of a Meyerbeer, Halevi and other masters? Go to the museums and you will find the pictures and statuary by Jewish artists, which enlist favorable attention. No, we hail with joy and gratitude the progress of modern civilization; for with it began the better days of our political emancipation and redemption.

Or are we intemperate in our habits, addicted to licentiousness and debauchery? to quarreling and fighting? Heaven forbid that we should pretend to be better than other people! We have our faults as well as other people, and do not intend to disclaim them. But the past history of eighteen centuries must testify that we always have been a sober and temperate people; that our domestic firesides have been distinguished for chastity, parental and filial affection, and that we always abstained from riotous and quarrelsome conduct. May Heaven grant—that is my sincere and fervent prayer—that our young men may equal in the future the past generations in chastity and morality, and that our women may always favor the old mothers of Israel in simplicity and true maternal virtues.

Or are we wanting in charity, in sympathy with our fellow men? Are we penurious in contributing our mite toward the relief of the poor and unfortunate? No, certainly no. Our Christian brethren and fellow citizens will cheerfully bear me out when I

assert that we are second to none, whenever the sacred cause of charity and benevolence is espoused. The inscription on our banner was always, "Charity." The saying of our old rabbis that "charity and benevolence are of more importance than all religious creeds and ceremonies put together," has not been neglected, and we do not consider it a virtue, but merely an imperative duty, to help and assist, whenever and by whomsoever we are called upon for relief.

Or is our law perhaps liberal only toward our co-religionists and illiberal toward all Gentiles? Open the books of Moses, and he enjoins most emphatically: "One law and one statute shall rule for you, and the stranger who dwells with you;" or (Lev. xix, 34), "But the stranger who dwelleth with you shall be as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself." And our rabbis add, "The verse, 'Man shall not oppress his fellow man,' means, 'Thy fellow man must be unto thee as thy brother, and thy brother as thy fellow man.'" We know of no distinction whatsoever between Jew and Gentile and are not allowed to practice any.

Or are we perhaps religiously intolerant against members of other denominations? Do we doom those whose creed and doctrines differ from ours to everlasting perdition, and exclude them from the so-called "salvation"? No, our creed teaches that the good ones of all denominations shall participate in the future bliss of heaven. And Maimonides, the greatest theologian of Judaism, already in the twelfth century declared most emphatically: "Know well that God only looks to the heart and its good intentions. All nations that exert themselves for morality, wisdom and revere their Creator will inherit the fu-

ture world." These doctrines are undoubtedly far ahead of the theological doctrines of many a church.

And still, while we are thus enabled to plead our cause, while, without any vainglory or ludicrous pretensions, we can claim that in our political, domestic and social relations we are no worse than other people are—still, I say, there is the prejudice against Jews and Judaism. Whence does it emanate? From what source does it flow? Let us, without any further circumlocution, call it by its proper name. It emanates from the fact that we do not recognize Jesus as God, and do not believe in the salvation as taught by the church.

To this charge we must plead guilty, but we can not help it. As long as it is said in the Old Testament, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord is One;" or, "Thou shalt know and take it to thy heart that the Lord is God in Heaven above and on the earth beneath, and there is none beside Him;" as long as the prophet's word reads, "Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel and His Redeemer, I am the first and I am the last, and beside me there is no God," so long will we faithfully cling to this sublime doctrine which alone is compatible with reason and common sense, and dispels all unintelligible mystery and blind faith. We will stand by it, assuming all the consequences flowing therefrom, and feel more than blessed in these words which teach us the universal Fatherhood of God and the common brotherhood of man.

We do not doubt that other denominations feel happy and contented in the doctrines of their churches; we hope that we all will meet in Heaven, no matter in what form we worship our Heavenly Father, provided our life on earth was characterized

by mutual love, morality and toleration; but we see no reason whatever why we should renounce our own creed, of which Frederick the Great of Prussia so pointedly said: "The Jews are not so wrong as people would make us believe them to be." Now we trust in the words of the prophet Zachariah: "And it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the nations, so I will save you and you shall be a blessing; fear not, but let your hands be strong." We hope and we pray that all religious prejudices will give way, as other prejudices have been eradicated; and that men worshiping in the most varied forms will enjoy that denominational peace which will be the glory of our civilization and the advent of the true religion of brotherly love and mutual toleration.

May Heaven's best blessings and man's continuous progress accelerate the coming of the happy time. Our glorious and God blessed country, by separating church and state, has taken the initiative in this glorious measure; and country after country in Europe is beginning to adopt the same wholesome policy. Push on, wise and brave men of every climate and every religion, onward, forward, the victory will be yours; for yours is the right. Hasten the time when men will no longer anathematize and curse each other; the time in which love and mutual regard will be the standing rule, and fanaticism and bigotry the powerless exception. By your combined effort hasten the time of which the Psalmist sings: "How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to live together in unity, united on earth and united in Heaven, forevermore."

THE CONTEST FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN CINCINNATI; OR, THE BIBLE QUESTION.[1]

I.

We are in the heat of a contest, the decision of which will be of the highest importance to the whole nation. Shall the Bible and the singing of religious hymns be retained in our free schools or excluded from them? Shall our schools be free schools, indeed, or shall they be tinged with any kind of sectarianism? This is the question of the day, which now is tried before the superior court of this city, and which, of course, causes intense excitement in all classes of the community.

If decided, as everybody expects, in favor of our nonsectarian school system, then the agitation of inserting an acknowledgment of God into our constitution will be silenced, the aspiration of the Catholics for the supremacy of their church will be at least legally frustrated; the separation of state and church will be gloriously vindicated, and the brightest gem in the American diadem, "Religious liberty and freedom of conscience," will have been put beyond the reach of any kind of fanaticism and bigotry.

The Catholics, or rather the Catholic clergy, are the sworn enemies of our free schools. The laity of the Roman Church would live with their fellow citi-

[1] Two letters to the *Jewish Times,* New York, December 10 and 17, 1869.

zens in peace, as heretofore. But the clergy gains daily a stronger hold over them, and misleads them to their hearts' content. The Jesuits, driven out of Spain and Italy as the enemies of their country, emigrate to this free country, and lay their traps with their usual masterly skill.

For more than nine months the *Catholic Telegraph,* the official organ of the Reverend Mr. Purcell, the archbishop of this diocese, has attacked the public schools of our city with all kinds of nicknames. It called them "godless," as they are without any religious instruction; warned the members of the Roman Church against sending and entrusting their children to such "corrupt and vile" institutions, denied to the city the right of taxing the Catholics for the support of such un-Christian (that means "un-Catholic") schools, and loudly and imperatively demands a division of the school fund.

The public schools of this city are visited by about nineteen thousand children, while the Catholic schools number about twelve thousand. An effort was made by the school board to bring these latter into the public schools by appointing a conference committee, to consult with the archbishop, as to what modifications of the course of study he would require in order to allow the Catholic children to visit the public schools. After some sharp debates he replied that during the sitting of the Ecumenical Council in Rome he would ask the opinion of Pope Pius IX on the subject and then communicate to the school board the result of his mission. The board, of course, spurned with supreme contempt such a hierarchical proposition. "What," said Rev. Mr. Mayo in the school board, "we, the free citizens of this gigantic country, shall wait for the

decision of a prince, whose political influence is reduced to a minimum, and who was the only prince of Europe who recognized the rebel states as a government? Never! Never!" The committee was discharged and the attempt of a union of the Catholic and American elements abandoned.

The Catholics can not be pleased either way. If the Bible and all sorts of religious instruction is excluded from the schools, they will nickname them "godless, atheistic institutions". If the board will retain the Bible, then the priests will cry, "These are sectarian schools, and we are not bound to support them". And the *Catholic Telegraph* was frank and sincere enough to acknowledge that nothing will satisfy the Roman priesthood but a division of the school fund.

The latter, led by the Jesuits, know very well what they are about. Whosoever is master of the youthful mind is master of the future and the country. They do not care for human liberties, nor the glory of our country—they care for Rome and the holy church. At her dictates they march; her interests are paramount to them, and blind obedience to the generals of their orders is one of their vows by which they are received into the various classes of the priesthood.

While this movement for a union of the free and Catholic schools was agitating the school board and the city, Mr. Miller, a member of the board, brought in his resolution to exclude the reading of the Bible and all kinds of religious singing and instruction from our public schools.

This proposition at once aroused the wildest storm among the Protestant portion of the community. The resolution was seconded by all the freethinkers and

all the Catholic members of the board. This fact aroused the suspicion that the Catholic priests were at the bottom of the movement; that the Catholics wanted to destroy our public schools, the proudest ornament of all our free and glorious institutions; and it was generally asserted that if we give up our schools we give up our liberties, our ideas and rights, and ere long we all will be in the grasp of the Roman priesthood and at the mercy of the Jesuits, who are nothing but the quartermasters of Rome.

So far, so good. But at the same time the spirit of religious fanaticism on the part of the Protestant churches was aroused. There came the cry from the pulpits: "This is a Christian country, and the Bible can and dare not be excluded; all our liberties and rights are derived from the Bible; this is a Christian, a Protestant nation, and neither infidels nor Catholics shall interfere with the religious spirit of our institutions".

Mass meetings were held and numerously attended; petitions signed by thousands of citizens were hurled at the school board; the papers were full of recriminations and bitter discussions, and all kinds of threats and personal slanders circulated. But the school board stood firm and coolly continued its discussion of the important motion of Mr. Miller. The free-thinkers called a public meeting of their own in Pike's Opera Hall, and Judge Stallo and Rev. Thomas Vickers delivered two masterly orations in vindication of religious liberty, the right of the school board, and the indisputable constitutionality of the proposition. This meeting was held on Saturday night, and on the following Monday evening the school board, by a two-

thirds majority, excluded the Bible and all religious instruction from the public schools.

On Tuesday morning the Protestants immediately applied to the superior court for an injunction against the action of the school board, and Judge Storer granted it. The excitement on both sides grew more intense, and both parties were resolved upon fighting out the legality and the constitutionality of the question. The school board called a special meeting and appointed three of the best lawyers in the city as their attorneys at a fee of twenty-five hundred dollars. Another cry, but all in vain, and since last Monday the case is now on trial before the court.

The judges of our superior court are men of unimpeachable integrity, enjoying the full and unbiased confidence of the community—an encomium that can not be bestowed on all the justices of our metropolitan courts. The presiding judge, Bellamy Storer, though strongly tainted with theological proclivities, will prove himself worthy of the unbribable reputation he enjoys.

Judge Taft[2] is the pillar of the radical Unitarian church of Rev. T. Vickers, and the trial suits him to the very core. Judge Hagans is a Methodist, but does not allow his judgment to run away with religious prejudices.

The trial is a regular tournament between modern philosophy and obsolete theology; quite of another stamp than Heine's famous disputation. The treasures of jurisprudence, theology, history, philosophy

[2] Alphonso Taft, later Minister to Russia and Attorney-General of the United States; the father of ex-President William H. Taft.

and general literature are overhauled and brought to bear upon this important question.

Attorney Ramsey, in a masterly effort, opened the case in favor of the reading of the Bible. His principal arguments were that the third section of the Bill of Rights of the Constitution says: "Religion, morality and knowledge being essentially necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of instruction shall forever be encouraged by legislative provision, not inconsistent with the rights of conscience".

Thereupon he argued that religion is taught in all the schools of Europe and hence it must be taught in our free schools too; and as morality and all our institutions are derived from Christianity, the Bible as the fountainhead of Christianity and our civilization must continue to be read in these our schools.

He was followed by Judge Stallo[3] in favor of the school board. Stallo is not only an eminent lawyer, but a profound and accomplished scholar, and the best-read man in the whole West. His argument lasted for over five long hours and was an intellectual treat, indeed. He proved beyond refutation that this country is no Christian, but an American country, and that our civilization is not at all the consequence of Christianity. The argument will be printed in pamphlet form, and I recommend it to all your readers. It has left a deep impression both on the court and all its hearers. It was an argument in favor of religious liberties, such as only men untramelled by theological legacies and bequests are able to deliver.

He was followed by Judge Hoadly[4] in the same

[3] J. B. Stallo, later United States Minister to Italy.
[4] George Hoadly, later Governor of Ohio.

strain. Hoadly, being at the head of the bar of the city, is a terrible antagonist in any lawsuit. With masterly eloquence he first proved that the court had no jurisdiction in the case and then vindicated his assertion that the Bible is not the source of morality. I shall refer to this point more amply before concluding my letter, as both speakers dealt rather unreservedly with the immoral stories of the Bible. Here is one quotation of Hoadly's speech:

"It is said that there is no morality without religion, and because morality dates from the Bible, we must secure the reading of the Bible in the schools. When did the novel proposition emerge from the brains of men that the Bible was the foundation of morality? All honor to the Bible; but morals existed before the Bible, before the world. Right and wrong are inherent and bind the throne of the Almighty just as much as they bind the hearts of men. . . . Give us entire emancipation from state interference in matters of religion, and it will be a security in the coming contest against those who shall contend for exclusive control, by denominations, in the schools (against the Catholics). It will secure a principle, which shall preserve us against intrusion on liberty of conscience, and bind the present Constitution as expounded by its highest tribunal."

The Supreme Court of Ohio has given the following important decision in the case of Bloom *versus* Richards, a decision of such great importance that it is quoted by the courts of almost all the states of the Union, and should be known by every citizen of the land:

"The Constitution of Ohio having declared that all men have a natural and inalienable right to worship

Almighty God according to the dictates of their conscience; that no man shall be compelled to attend, erect or support any place of worship, or to maintain any ministry against his consent; and that no preference shall ever be given by law to any religious society or mode of worship, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification to any office of trust or profit; it follows *that neither Christianity nor any other system of religion is a part of the law of this state.* We sometimes hear it said that all religions are tolerated in Ohio, but the expression is not strictly accurate. Much less accurate is it to say that one religion is a part of the law and all others are only tolerated. It is not by mere toleration that every individual here is protected in his belief or disbelief. He reposes not upon the leniency of government or the liberality of any class or sect of men, but upon his natural indefeasible rights of conscience, which, in the language of the Constitution, is beyond the control or interference of any human authority. We have no union of church and state, nor has our government ever been vested with authority to enforce any religious observance simply because it is religious."

II.

The further the trial on the exclusion of the Bible from our public schools progresses, the more does it assume a character not only of local and national, but cosmopolitan importance. The spirit of modern criticism is arraigned against the shadows of antiquated theology; the spirit of free thought and inquiry against the obsolete traditions of bigotry and hierarchy; the spirit of an emancipated civilization

against the thraldom of fashionable church notions and fossilized mummery.

I have stated in my last letter that the Board of Education had engaged three prominent lawyers to defend its action in reference to the Bible. All three have been on the benches of our various courts, but have vacated them years ago for the lucrative business of their offices.

They had agreed to subdivide the subject among themselves. Judge Stallo, an unbeliever according to the phraseology of the all-wise theologians, was charged, after having defined some of the legal points, to review the question from the historical, literary and philosophical standpoint. Judge Hoadly, the radical Unitarian and one of the acutest lawyers in the far West, was entrusted with all the legal points involved in this affair. And both of them thought that Judge Matthews, a devout churchmember, was to conclude "with the prayer".

Stallo, the profound scholar and thinker, displayed such an amount of learning, reading and bold originality that the whole community was startled. His argument was named by the papers "an oration"; it was brilliant, lucid, striking in the extreme. Hoadly, as was to be expected, left no stone of jurisprudence untouched, and defended the action of the school board with a skill and acumen that left a deep impression both on the court and the audience.

But both were far surpassed by the argument of Judge Matthews.[1] He spoke for seven long hours, and kept the courtroom thoroughly entranced. There stood a devout Christian, an elder of his church, a

[1] Stanley Matthews, later Associate Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

pillar of his congregation; time and again he made during his argument a frank and open confession of his creed and sincere religious sentiments; but he stood there, too, as the divine and fearless champion of right, equality and untrammeled religious liberty; and even his opponents had unanimously to acknowledge, "This was one of the finest efforts ever made at our bar". A prominent lawyer remarked: "I would rather have delivered this argument than any speech of Daniel Webster. There was principle, truth and conviction in his effort. Nothing visionary, nothing for mere display; every word *ad hominem* and to the purpose."

It was the display of the true, genuine features of the American character. The true American, nature's nobleman, does not know anything about religious fanaticism and bigotry. It is only since the large tide of immigration has set in that he was somewhat affected with this spirit imported from Europe. He believes in liberty, civil and religious; he takes his constitution for a self-evident truth, and not as a mere document of convenience and compromise. He respects every creed; he does not allow his love for freedom to be misled by religious proclivities, and he is only therein mistaken that he thinks everybody else must be as freeminded as he is. God bless America and the Americans.

Such a true specimen of the unadulterated American character is Judge Matthews. He entered the lists "without fear or favor". He dealt severe blows to the judges on the bench, to his opponents and to his colleagues, but all in such a dignified, reverential way that everyone almost listened to him with devotion. His language was so chaste, sincere, calm and

dignified that his argument deserves to be translated in the languages of all civilized nations. It will prove to be a document for the religion of the future, and it should not be found missing in any private or public library.

The space of the *Times* does not permit to print it in full. The *Commercial* has published an edition of all the arguments *pro* and *con* for the trifling charge of five cents. I heartily advise every one of your readers to procure a copy, if your metropolitan papers will not publish these masterly arguments in full.

I shall give you but a few extracts, mostly referring to the Jews, and of special interest to your readers. After having depicted the various opinions of the Protestant community, he continued:

"Then there is a large number of the citizens of this community who are not Christians at all, and yet are devout religionists. They are the descendents of the men who crucified Christ; and yet, as old Sir Thomas Brown says, 'We ought not to bear malice against them for that, for how often since have we, who profess his name, crucified him, too'. But here they are in this community, devout worshipers of the only living and true God, according to their conscientious convictions, and I will say, if Your Honors please, in all respects capable of performing every duty of the civil state, and equally entitled to, not toleration—I hate this word, there is no such thing known in this country as toleration—but civil and religious equality, equality because it is right, and a right".

After having described the Catholics, he said:

"And now I try to stand impartial and neutral between these three sects of men. I am bound to look

on them all as citizens, all as entitled to every right, to every privilege that I claim for myself. And further, I do entertain the charity of believing that they are just as honest and just as sincere in their religious convictions as I am."

Referring in a lengthy and practical argument to the reading of the Bible, which he proves to be a sectarian book, he continued:

"Now, if Your Honors please, what will you do with the Jew, of whom it was once said by a Jew, whose authority Your Honor recognized, 'What advantageth it to be a Jew? Much every way; but chiefly because to him were committed the oracles of God'. Your Honor has lectured in Dr. Lilienthal's Sabbath School."

Judge Storer, on the bench—"Certainly, and I would do it again, and in Catholic schools, if they would let me".

Judge Matthews—"And therefore, Your Honor recognizes not only civilly, but religiously, that as far as they go, they are on the right road".

Judge Storer—"They have the Bible".

Judge Matthews—"They have a part of it; but the remainder of it, to the Jew, is sacrilege and blasphemy against God".

Judge Storer—"Not quite as far as that, because my friend, Dr. Lilienthal, made me a present of a Syriac Testament awhile ago, and said it was the language in which Jesus spoke".

Judge Matthews—"Dr. Lilienthal did not live in the day, 'when the chief persons thereof and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify him, Crucify him". Pilate sayeth unto them, "Take ye him, for I find no evil in him". The Jews answered him, "We

have a law, He ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God".' So the record of His divine life and death and resurrection is something more to a Jew than an ordinary life; it is blasphemy, sacrilege. And yet, Your Honor, would by law compel the reading of that book, of that record, of that life and resurrection, to the children of Jewish parents or else forbid them to come into the common schools that belong to them, as they do to Your Honor, and to us all equally?"

The attorneys for the other side advanced arguments in favor of the retention of the Bible, which, to the bitter disappointment of the enlightened part of the community, did show to what absurdities men are led when they have to defend a bad cause. Afraid of standing up for a union of church and state, they invented the new theory of uniting religion and state, as if both sentences were not equivalent. Mr. Rufus King stated time and again, and argued on it at great length, "that the state here is asking succor from religion". What an absurdity! Do not the Catholics advance the same argument; and if deservedly censured for it, are not the Protestants on a par with them who wish to introduce such new theories into our country? But this is not all. King and Sage both asserted "that the state has a right to force the child away from its parents into schools, and then impose upon him the teachings of religion; and that the child has a right of conscience which is superior to the right of parent".

Does not this argument sound like a harangue by Torquemada, the Grand Inquisitor of Spain? Did not the Inquisition for the same reason, of saving the soul, burn the heretics, and consider it a holy work

of religion? Judge Matthews had anticipated this attack and asked the learned gentlemen whether they would not approve also of the Mortara affair, and all similar acts which all were done *in magnam Dei ecclesiaeque gloriam?* Thank God, these men are not by far as fanatic as one would judge them to be from these arguments. King is my personal friend—a gentleman in every sense of the word; and during the ten years we were together in the school board, I have always found him to be an American in the fullest sense of the word.

The arguments are now closed. Harper Brothers telegraphed here for the manuscripts of all the speeches, with the intent of publishing them in book form. But the publishing house of Robert Clarke & Co., of this city, was ahead of them, and copies will be forwarded next week to New York.

I have just seen the Hon. Bellamy Storer, the presiding judge of the superior court, who said to me that the decision will not be given before three weeks. The court, being fully impressed with the national importance of the case, and the judges being too much engaged in their special terms, they will take their proper time for preparing a decision worthy of the case and the high reputation of the court.

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